Islamic Concept of Intermediation

(Tawassul)

Prof Dr Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri

EDITED BY
Prof Iftikhar A. Sheikh

ASSISTANCE
M. Farooq Rana

Minhaj-ul-Qur'an Publications
Lahore, Pakistan

➔ Entire income of Prof Dr Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri's books, recorded audio/video cassettes & CDs of his lectures/addresses, is dedicated forever on his behalf to Minhaj-ul-Qur'an Movement.

Composed by: Abdul Khaliq Baltistani

Under the aegis of:
Farid-e-Millat Research Institute
366-M, Model Town, Lahore-54700, Pakistan.

Published by:
Minhaj-ul-Qur'an Publications
365-M, Model Town, Lahore-54700, Pakistan.
☎+92-42-5168514, 5169111-3
Fax: +92-42-5168184
URL: http://www.minhaj.org
E-mail: tehreek@minhaj.org

Printed by Minhaj-ul-Qur'an Printing Press, Pakistan.

Contents

Preface

Islam is a comprehensive religion as it covers all aspects of human life. It is a religion of balance and moderation; it avoids extremes. Other religions overplay one aspect of human life and underplay the other, and are, therefore, lopsided. For example, in some religions the spiritual component of life is overstressed and man is raised to the level of a mere abstraction; in other religions, the physical and the palpable aspect is overemphasized and man is reduced to the level of an animal or a machine. Their extremistic attitude not only creates imbalance but also encourages a variety of splits and contradictions, which not only disillusion their more sensitive followers but also give rise to a sense of general apathy, even revulsion, towards their high-sounding claims. Islam acknowledges the relevance of both aspects of human life, the physical and the spiritual. But it does not dissociate them from each other; rather it weaves them into a higher form of unity. Islam acknowledges the pressure of physical compulsions but it does not give them a free ride. On the other hand, it frames a set of definite rules to channelize them into more positive outlets; similarly, it acknowledges man's spiritual yearnings and tries to cast them into a mould that is compatible with practical realities. Thus, by blending man's basic aspirations and needs into a practicable framework of action and contemplation, it caters most

comprehensively to the undeniable reality of human existence.

The springboard of Islamic faith is the concept of divine unity, belief in the oneness of Allah. All other values flow from this basic belief. Allah is the Supreme Creator. He has engendered no one nor has He been engendered by anyone. Anyone who denies divine unity commits the most heinous sin and this sin is unpardonable. All other sins may be condoned by Him but the sin of associating partners with Him cannot be redeemed. Thus, in our present chaotic world, Islam is a message of hope and salvation as it gives a shape and a binding to the sprawling diversity of natural and human phenomena. People without faith are overawed by this apparent lack of focus and connection but the people of faith are convinced that man's drifting condition is propelled by a sense of direction, and the first step in that direction is to acknowledge the oneness of the Supreme Creator. Those who deny the reality of this ultimate source spend their lives floundering in the dark of confusion and uncertainty. But those who embrace it as the blood jet of their lives find it a source of continuous physical and spiritual nourishment. The need for belief in divine unity is far more urgent in the present time. With all technological progress, modern man is still a moral cipher. He is a slave to his greed and lust for material objects. This has induced in him a sense of rampant selfishness, which in fact is a denigration of the very purpose of his creation. In this murky scenario, Islam is the only religion that provides them a glimmer of salvation; it practically demonstrates to them that there is a light at the end of the tunnel, and that every cloud has a silver lining.

Belief in divine unity gives human life a sense of purpose and direction, and this sense of purpose inculcates in man a sense of responsibility and accountability. His actions spring from the belief that he will be ultimately judged by the Supreme Creator on the day fixed by Him. This is the day when his evil acts will be punished and his virtuous acts will be rewarded. And, in the light of this basic belief, Islam has framed a set of rules and laws to help human beings steer themselves towards the right direction and eschew the path of evil. Those who perform good deeds will earn great dividends and those who do evil on this earth will be appropriately penalized. And the beauty of Islamic faith is that it has not clamped these prescriptions on its followers in a rigid conceptual frame. While devising rules, Islam has generously provided with a set of exemptions and relief. For example, the holy Qur'ān has prepared a limited inventory of forbidden acts and declared all other acts as categorically lawful or observed discreet silence about them. This reflects the deepest divine wisdom and His sharp insight into human psychology. By not mechanically restricting lawful acts, it has provided man with an almost unrestricted range of valid options and, instead of curtailing his freedom; it has blessed him with unprecedented latitude of expression and mobility of action. This is in express contrast with other religions where human freedom is drastically slashed and human beings are reduced to mere puppets without any possibility of choice.

Allah, being the Supreme Creator, has tailored divine laws to human expectations and aspirations. It is this aspect of Islam, which brings it closest to human nature. Allah

knows that man is genetically weak; his willpower and resistance break down in trying circumstances. Therefore, to make things easier for man, He has, in His infinite mercy and magnanimity, consciously narrowed down the list of prescriptions and has showered countless concessions and choices on man. So Islam is not a straitjacket religion; it does not enjoin upon its followers to lead a pressure cooker existence; rather it expects its adherents to live creatively to explore the universe and to make maximum contribution to the welfare of humanity.

Allah also knows that, in the absence of strong faith, man feels insecure. Therefore, He has allowed him means to fortify his faith in different ways. One of these ways is to rely on the support and mediation of His own favourites, people who live for His pleasure alone and who have resolved the dichotomy between intentions and deeds and are on the right track. Their close proximity to Allah is a consequence of their love for Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), which they have persistently strengthened and steeled by their noble acts. Knowing that man is not only impatient but is also unable to sustain the requisite level of concentration which is a prerequisite for the acceptance of his supplications, Allah has allowed him to rely on the means of His pious people for the fulfilment of his needs and the alleviation of his troubles. This act is called the act of intermediation. It means that a needy person or the petitioner can process his supplication or prayer through these favourites of Allah. The rationale behind this mediation is that Allah holds His favourites so dear that, while He can turn down the petition of an ordinary creature, He will never turn down the request of His

favourite. And since His most favourite and beloved friend is the holy Prophet (ﷺ), any supplication processed through him carries the divine guarantee of its acceptance. The sanity and propriety of this mode of dependence is corroborated by evidence exuding from every pore and joint of the phenomenal world in which we live.

The reality of intermediation as a valid and permissible act has been established by the holy Qur'ān and the practice of the Prophet (ﷺ), the Companions, the Successors and the righteous people. In the presence of the evidence of such an overwhelming and authentic nature, there is hardly any scope left for doubting its validity and sanctity. But there are people among the Muslims who do not hesitate to condemn it as an invalid act. To buttress their negative interpretation, they rely on Qur'ānic evidence and traditions. But their interpretation is motivated by misunderstanding and perversity. They tend to decontextualize the Qur'ānic verses and clamp on interpretation on them that suits their own preconceptions and prejudices. For example, the verses that are intended to be applied to the non-believers, they apply to the believers and therefore, misunderstand their genesis and rationale. And they parade their misunderstanding as enlightened inference or deduction which in itself amounts to perversion. Then they twist the meaning of the Qur'ānic verses out of shape maliciously or out of sheer ignorance and try to generate confusion among the common run of Muslims. For example, no Muslim denies that Allah is Supreme and that it is His will that prevails in all conditions and circumstances. No human being, no matter has elevated or superior he is, has the power to dictate to

Allah. Thus they conclude that since no one except Allah has the power to grant our wishes or fulfil our needs, therefore, to rely on non-Allah or any other human being for the realization of our wishes and needs is an unlawful act and therefore, must be condemned in the strongest terms. They start from the right premises but draw a wrong inference from it. They confuse the perception of reality with the reality, the sizzle with the steak and the flame with the fire. While Allah has absolute power, the power of His creatures is derivative; they derive their power from Allah; therefore, no creature, no matter has hallowed, can claim to be as powerful as Allah. Any Muslim who thinks so is committing disbelief and is therefore, not a believer. What the act of intermediation seems to indicate and prove is not a denial of the absolute power of Allah, it only affirms the derivative or reflective power of His creatures and again this power is conferred on them by Allah Himself.

A true believer knows that this world of material interaction is a watered-down reflection of the world of spiritual interaction, and relations in both worlds are governed by a system of graded hierarchies. In this world, man has to rely on other men not only for day-to-day functioning, but also for his security and survival. There are men who are more influential, more powerful, more qualified and knowledgeable. He needs their help on many occasions. Suppose a man applied for a fancy car permit, which is sanctioned by the government of the day in very special cases. The chances are that his application will be shelved or pigeonholed. But if he knows someone powerful or influential in the ministry that sanctions these permits, his application through him is most likely to be processed

immediately and it is quite possible that he will get the permit within a few days of applying for it. On the other hand, a man without clout and contacts stands an extremely remote chance of realizing his dream. From the peon to the president and from the clerk to the chief secretary, this system of favours and concessions operates, sometimes in a subtle manner and sometimes in a flagrant manner. If the application had not been mediated through the powerful man, it would have remained on the back burner for a long long time and might eventually have been turned down altogether. The same applies to the world of spiritual values though here the network of relations does not operate on a material basis; it is geared by one's deep attachment with the person whose mediation is being sought. When a believer mediates his request or petition through a prophet or a righteous person, he is doing so out of his love for that holy person and so his petition is granted through the mediation of that person. But it should be kept in mind that it is Allah Alone Who grants the petition. The prophet or the righteous person only expedites it and serves as the means of its acceptance because Allah does not like to turn down the supplications and prayers of His favourites.

Thus the book *Islamic Concept of Intermediation* through exhaustive research and extensive marshalling of details, arguments and proofs, drawn from the Qur'ān, the hadiths, and the practice of the Companions, has conclusively proved the reality and validity of intermediation. Those who deny its legitimacy and legality are only driven by their ignorance, lack of understanding or sheer perversity. Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri deserves a lot of praise for his keen insight into the subtleties and nuances of the

religion of Islam, as this is the only book of its kind available in English language, both in terms of the quantity and the quality of its contents.

In the end, I highly acknowledge the matchless efforts of M. Farooq Rana who assisted me in the editing of the book with enthusiastic spirit.

Prof Iftikhar A. Sheikh
Rabī‘-ul-Awwal, 1421 AH.

About the Book

Islamic Concept of Intermediation is the most comprehensive work available on the topic in English. Maximum effort has been made to make the book stylistically simple, so that it may facilitate the readers to understand it clearly. Materials and contents are taken from the most authentic sources.

Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri deserves a lot of praise for his keen insight into the subtleties and nuances of the religion of Islam, as this is the only book of its kind available in English language, both in terms of the quantity and the quality of its contents.

Most importantly any errors found in the book are mine, the praise is His, and the writer, in any case, is not to be blamed for the mistakes whatsoever. Suggestions will highly be welcomed and appreciated. I am sure they will certainly work as a catalyst in improving the book and making it more authentic and comprehensive.

M. Farooq Rana
Research Scholar
Farid-e-Millat Research Institute

Rabī'-ul-Awwal, 1421 AH.

CHAPTER ONE

Reality of Intermediation

SECTION ONE

Basic conceptions of intermediation

The relevance and wholesomeness of the concept of intermediation is an established fact. The negation of this reality is in fact the negation of the Qur'ānic injunctions. This attitude is simply inconceivable for any Muslim, irrespective of his group affiliation. Intermediation is a twofold act: on the one hand, it acknowledges the humility and helplessness of the creature who has a pressing need to be fulfilled; on the other hand, it asserts the superiority of an act which has been hallowed by divine sanction, or of a personage who enjoys divine approval through a series of noble deeds. The idea behind intermediation is not to vitiate or supplant divine authority but to facilitate the acceptance of human needs through the act of prayer. Thus the act of intermediation involves a sliding-scale of graded functions: at the bottom is the humble creature who hopes for a favourable divine response; in the middle is the sanctified act or the personage who has developed closer affiliation with God through meditation, prayer and human service and at the top is God Himself Who Alone possesses the power to grant the prayer.

The concept does not imply that the intermediary will grant the prayer or that he will pressurize God to grant the prayer of an individual or condone his sins. This is an egregious misconception, which haunts the minds of a number of people. In fact, the prayee believes that when he mediates his prayer through divinely blessed persons, after positing his own helplessness and after articulating the praise of God, He will fulfil his need as a token of courtesy to the intermediary. He does not even have the creeping notion that the intermediary is a partner in divinity. It is, therefore, vitally significant to grasp the reality of intermediation to obviate any misunderstanding, especially on the part of those who are prone to interpreting it in a characteristically un-Islamic sense.

It should be understood at the very outset that intermediation is only a form of prayer to be answered by God Alone. The intermediary is only a medium who serves as a means to activate the process of its fulfilment.

It should also be noted that the choice of an intermediary depends on two vital factors; first he is loved by the prayee and secondly he is also loved by God. Therefore, to love someone simply because he is loved by God is in itself a virtuous act, so his choice as an intermediary becomes indisputable. This is the factual position and if someone harps on another string, he is not only mistaken but is also committing an ignominious deed. This contention is easily endorsed by the logic of commonsense. If the prayee believes that the intermediary can harm or benefit like God, he is guilty of a heinous sin and will be dismissed as a believer on the basis of this erroneous belief.

Besides, it is not necessary that mediation alone should serve as a guarantee for the realization of prayer, because Allah says:

> *And (O beloved,) when My servants ask you about Me, (tell them,) "I am Near."*[1]

> *(O beloved,) say, "Call upon Allah or call upon ar-Rahmān (the most Merciful), by whichever name you call on Him, His are the most beautiful names."*[2]

The misunderstanding that intermediation is a form of coercion should end now as the intermediary cannot force God to grant a prayer against His Own will. No one can dictate to Him, we can only beseech Him. It is only an expression of His infinite mercy that he has upscaled some of His creatures on the grounds of their love and obedience and turned them into agents of redemption for millions of ordinary people who, without their mediation, might have drifted in sheer hopelessness and frustration. This is an indirect divine recognition of their services that God puts a positive spin on whatever is associated with them. It is for the same reason that sacred places and objects are offered as means. The purpose is to boost human expectation for the divine reprieve.

---

1. Qur'ān (*al-Baqarah*) 2:186.
2. Qur'ān (*al-Isrā'*) 17:110.

Different views about intermediation

There is complete agreement on some aspects of intermediation while a fractious climate of opinion marks its other aspects.

The Muslim scholars agree that virtuous deeds like prayer, fasting, pilgrimage to Makkah, zakat and recitation of the holy Qur'ān can serve as legitimate means of intermediation. There are, of course, some people who deny intermediation without action (passive intermediation) i.e. through prophets, righteous ones, saints and relics, though the Muslim scholars have affirmed the possibility of intermediation through these means. These differences have been eloquently highlighted by Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī:

"The conflicting view relates to intermediation without action (passive intermediation), i.e. when individuals and personalities are taken as means, for example, to say, "O God, I take Your Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) as an intermediary to You," or "I take Abū Bakr as-Siddīq or 'Umar bin al-Khattāb or 'Uthmān or 'Alī as intermediaries to You." Some scholars treat it as forbidden. I believe that this difference is only superficial because in intermediation through an individual, the intermediary powers are vested in that individual on the basis of his deeds and intermediation through action is unanimously acceptable. People who deny intermediation have adopted a stubborn posture. If they had cared to look at the problem perceptibly, it would have cleared up, the doubts would have vanished and the conflict would have resolved which has led them to hurl unsavoury allegations against the

Muslims. Intermediation without action is actually attributed to the intermediary and he has acquired this status on the basis of his actions. A man tends to choose someone as his intermediary because he loves him and reposes unqualified trust in his spiritual superiority as a consequence of this love, or he believes the intermediary is loved by Allah Himself. As He says:

(Allah) loves them and they love Him.[1]

Or he believes that all these qualities are found in the intermediary. If you reflect on it, you are bound to find this matrix of love. And this belief is the action of the intermediary because belief is a form of action, which grips his heart. The intermediatee seems to say:

"O, my Lord! Undoubtedly, I love such and such person and I truly believe that he also loves You, he is Your loyal servant and he wages jihad for Your sake, and I believe You love him too, and You are pleased with him, and I offer him as an intermediary on account of my love for him, and I believe You will grant my prayer."

"But there are a number of religious scholars (intermediationists) who limit its scope to the One Whose knowledge spans the secrets of the heavens and the earth and Who can detect the waywardness of the eyes and penetrate the secrets of the hearts. A person who says, "I take the Prophet (ﷺ) as my intermediary," and the other who says, "I take the Prophet (ﷺ) as my intermediary because I love him," are both on the same footing because

1. Qur'ān (*al-Mā'idah*) 5:54.

he has chosen the first source of intermediation on the basis of his trust in the Prophet (ﷺ) and his love for him. If the prayee had not loved and trusted the Prophet (ﷺ), he would not have chosen him as his intermediary. The same applies to the saints and the holy personages.

"This discussion lifts the haze off of the concept of intermediation. It clearly shows that the difference is only superficial and does in no way insinuate that the prayees (intermediatees) should be maligned as non-believers and chucked out of the fold of Islam. It is a moral stigma."[1]

True sense of the concept of intermediation

Some people are reluctant to pray through the mediation of the holy Prophet (ﷺ) on account of lack of knowledge. They think that praying through mediation is incompatible with praying directly to Allah. This attitude is grounded in a misunderstanding of the Qur'ānic verses, which enjoin upon the believers to pray directly to Allah and to eschew associating partners with Him. As a result of misinterpretation they believe that to approach Allah through an intermediary amounts to a denial of divine unity. This conception is based on ignorance and misunderstanding and we should try to correct it. To approach Allah while praying, through a prophet or a messenger, a holy person or a pious deed, is neither a denial of the oneness of Allah nor is it inconsistent with an unmediated appeal to Him.

---

1. Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī, *Mafāhīm yajib an tusahhah*, (pp.117-8).

In spite of the intermediation, we pray to Allah directly and not to the intermediary. One commits the act of denying Allah only when he, in opposition to Him, regards someone else as the arbitrator of profit and loss, as the absolute power and as the granter of prayers. But the situation here does not warrant any such development. The prayer is submitted only to Allah, and while appealing to Him to grant these needs and desires, the mediation of the holy Prophet (ﷺ), a saintly person or a pious deed is cited because they enjoy Allah's love and favour and, therefore, He has greater regard for them than for other creatures. So such form of intermediation not only makes the words of prayer more effective but also raises its chances of acceptance by Allah. Now his prayer is not a simple prayer, it is rather a blend of his request and divine love. The urgency of his need combines with Allah's magnanimity and acquires a holier complexion. It should be noted that the grant of prayers is not contingent on mediation but it definitely expedites their fulfilment. The holy Prophet (ﷺ) himself instructed his companions to pray through his mediation as we come to know through a tradition narrated by 'Uthmān bin Hunayf that the Prophet (ﷺ) taught a blind man to pray:

> *O Allah, I appeal to You, and submit to You through the mediation of the merciful Prophet Muhammad. O Muhammad,*

through your mediation I submit myself to my Lord to have my need granted. O Allah, acknowledge his intercession in my favour.[1]

'Umar used to pray for rain through the mediation of the Prophet's uncle 'Abbās as is attributed to Anas.[2] Once when Medina was in the grip of a severe drought, 'Ā'ishah

---

1. Ibn Mājah transmitted it in his *Sunan*, b. of *iqāmat-us-salāt was-sunnah fīhā* (establishing prayer and its sunnahs), ch.189 (1:441#1385) and declared it *sahīh* (sound); Tirmidhī in *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *da'awāt* (supplications), ch.119 (5:569#3578) and graded it *hasan* (fair) *sahīh* (sound) *gharīb* (unfamiliar or rare); Ahmad bin Hambal in his *Musnad* (4:138); and Hākim in *al-Mustadrak* (1:313,519,526-7) and Dhahabī also declared it *sahīh* (sound). Bukhārī narrated it in *at-Tārīkh-ul-kabīr* (6:209-10); Nasā'ī, *'Amal-ul-yawm wal-laylah* (pp.417-8#658-60); Ibn Khuzaymah, *as-Sahīh* (2:225-6#1219); Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (6:166-7); Ibn-us-Sunnī, *'Amal-ul-yawm wal-laylah* (p.202#622); Subkī, *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (pp.123,125); Nawawī, *al-Adhkār* (p.83); Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:558-9); Ibn-ul-Athīr, *Asad-ul-ghābah* (3:571); Mundhirī, *at-Targhīb wat-tarhīb* (1:473-4); Yūsuf Mizzī, *Tuhfat-ul-ashrāf bi-ma'rifat-il-atrāf* (7:236#9760); Suyūtī, *Khasā'is-ul-kubrā* (2:201); Qastallānī, *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (4:594); Zurqānī in his *Commentary* (12:221-2); Ibn Hajar Haythamī, *al-Jawhar-ul-munazzam* (p.61); and Shawkānī in *Tuhfat-udh-dhākirīn* (pp.194-5).
2. Bukhārī narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *istisqā'* (to invoke Allah for rain at the time of drought) ch.3 (1:342-3#964), and b. of *fadā'il-us-sahābah* (the virtues of the Companions) ch.11 (3:1360#3507); Ibn Hibbān, *as-Sahīh* (7:110-1#2861); Ibn Khuzaymah, *as-Sahīh* (2:337-8#1421); Hākim, *al-Mustadrak* (3:334); Ibn 'Abd-ul-Barr, *al-Istī'āb fī ma'rifat-il-ashāb* (3:97); Bayhaqī in *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (3:352) and *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (6:147); Baghawī, *Sharh-us-sunnah* (4:409#1165); Nawawī, *al-Adhkār* (p.80); Subkī, *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (p.128); Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *Fath-ul-bārī* (2:494); Qastallānī, *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (4:277); Zurqānī in his *Commentary* (11:151-3); Shawkānī, *Tuhfat-udh-dhākirīn* (p.58); and Muhammad Zāhid Kawtharī in his *Maqālāt* (p.380).

asked some of the Companions and residents of the city to visit the holy Prophet's grave, and on account of his blessings, it rained in buckets.[1]

In short, this blessed act has been popular and prevalent from the days of Adam (عليه السلام) and other prophets to the period of the holy prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), the Companions and the Successors and right down to the present-day Muslims. Now some people, hopelessly deficient in a correct understanding of *dīn*, are raising unfounded objections against its efficacy, and treating it as a challenge to the uniqueness of Allah. Therefore, it is imperative that the injunctions of Shariah should be understood in their true essence and perspective so that we do not distort them for lack of knowledge and understanding.

Important terminology about *tawassul*

Whenever we discuss the concept of intermediation we should take into account four factors, which are interlinked:

1. *Wasīlah:* mediation; the means of approach.

2. *Mutawassil:* intermediatee; the prayee who chooses his own pious deed or a personage or a place as a source of intermediation in his prayer.

3. *Mutawassal bihī:* intermediary; intermediator; an object that is offered as a source of intermediation to Allah, for example, virtuous deeds, saintly personages and hallowed signs and acts associated with them.

---

1. Dārimī narrated it in ch.15 of the *muqaddimah* (introduction) to his *Sunan* (1:43#93); Ibn-ul-Jawzī, *al-Wafā' bi-ahwāl-il-Mustafā* (2:801); Subkī, *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (p.128); Qastallānī, *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (4:276); and Zurqānī in his *Commentary* (11:150).

4. ***Mutawassal ilayh:*** Allah is the Focus of all intermediation because it is submitted to Him Alone.

SECTION TWO

Literal and technical meanings of *tawassul* and its kinds

Literal meaning of *tawassul*

Tawassul (intermediation) and *wasīlah* (means) are similarly used. Lexicologists think that *wasīlah* is a means of achieving an objective.

1. Imam Rāghib Asfahānī comments:

> Wasīlah *means to seek willingly access to something and since it is based on willingness, it is related to* wasīlah, *the means of approach.*[1]

2. Ibn Manzūr, in his research conducted on the word *wasīlah*, writes:

1. Rāghib Asfahānī, *Mufradāt alfāz al-Qur'ān* (p.871).

> *In fact,* wasīlah *is a means of approach to something to attain nearness to it.*[1]

3. Imam Zamakhsharī says:

> *Everything that helps in seeking means of approach, that is, nearness to Allah, is* wasīlah.[2]

Technical meaning of *tawassul*

Tawassul carries multiple meanings. It is used in the sense of need, inclination, stature and nearness; three of these senses are consistent with its technical usage:

1. Highest station

Wasīlah is the highest station in Paradise, which is reserved for the intercessor – the holy Prophet (ﷺ) – on the Day of Judgement. It is usual for Muslims to pray, after the call to prayer, that Muhammad (ﷺ) may obtain this station. It is related to Bukhārī that the Prophet (ﷺ) himself persuaded his followers to offer the following prayer:

1. Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān-ul-Arab* (11:725).
2. Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf ‘an haqā’iq ghawāmid-it-tanzīl* (1:488).

> *Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said as reported by Jābir bin 'Abdullāh: Anyone who prays after the call to prayer, "O Lord, in exchange for this complete invitation and standing prayer, make Muhammad (ﷺ) a source of intermediation and superiority and appoint him to the highest station in Paradise as promised by You," my intercession for him on the Day of Judgement will be obligatory.*[1]

In this supplication (*du'ā'*), *al-wasīlah* means 'a spot which is a special grade of excellence in Paradise,' this is also the highest station reserved for the Prophet (ﷺ). Whenever we invoke the mediation of the holy Prophet (ﷺ), we have in mind this specific place in Paradise.

2. Proximity to Allah

The nearness to Allah is in itself a source of intermediation. When a creature comes close to Allah through the perfection of his faith, obedience to His rules and prescriptions, observance of forms of worship, following the sunnah and avoiding sins, this nearness to Allah in itself becomes a source of intermediation. Similarly those who

---

1. Bukhārī, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *adhān* (the call to prayer) ch.8 (1:222#589); Nasā'ī, *Sunan,* b. of *adhān* (2:27); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (3:354); Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *Fath-ul-bārī* (2:94; 8:399); Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (1:410); Baghawī, *Sharh-us-sunnah* (2:283-4#420); Muhammad Khatīb Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt-ul-masābīh*, b. of *salāt* (prayer) ch.4 (1:216#659).

work with sincerity of intention acquire close access to Allah and are elevated to the stature of His favourites. Their sincerity and affiliation keep them steadily glued to the right path and serve as an mediation to counter the tricks of the devil. According to Allah Himself, Satan has sworn to lead the believers astray:

> *(Satan) said, "I swear by Your honour that I will mislead all of them."*[1]

But he will never be able to mislead those who have attained nearness to Allah.

3. Source of intermediation

All objects, which are a means to attain the nearness of Allah, also serve as sources of intermediation whether they are related to individuals or deeds. The Qur'ān has made it permissible to seek the means of approach, and what is permitted cannot be waived without proper *shar'ī* argument or convincing proof. The Qur'ān says:

> *O believers! Fear Allah and seek means (of approach to) His (presence and to His nearness and accessibility).*[2]

This verse does not stress any specific application and includes both acts and individuals. The same verse acts as an explicit justification of intermediation.

1. Qur'ān (*Sād*) 38:82.
2. Qur'ān (*al-Mā'idah*) 5:35.

Shāh Ismā‘īl Dihlawī interprets the Qur’ānic verse as the direction provided by the spiritual guide:

> *People who are in search of the true conduct mean by* wasīlah *a kind of guide. Search for the guide should necessarily precede the hard struggle that is required for the attainment of true success, and Allah has prescribed this method for the seekers of the true path. Therefore, without the direction of the guide, its acquisition is almost impossible.*[1]

Kinds of *tawassul*

Tawassul may be divided into the following kinds:

1. *at-Tawassul lid-du‘ā’*
2. *at-Tawassul fid-du‘ā’*
3. *at-Tawassul bid-du‘ā’*
4. *at-Tawassul bin-nidā’*
5. *at-Tawassul bil-a‘māl-is-sālihah*
6. *at-Tawassul bi-āthār-is-sālihīn*

---

1. Ismā‘īl Dihlawī, *Sirāt mustaqīm* (p.58).

1. *at-Tawassul lid-du'ā'*

> *This (kind of intermediation) seeks nearness of Allah through a source approved by Shariah.*

2. *at-Tawassul fid-du'ā'*

> *When a need or worry is submitted to Allah for its relief, the help of an intermediary is sought to fulfil the need or remove the worry.*

Difference between the two

The first kind of intermediation is a means of drawing near to Allah while the second kind of intermediation serves to fulfil the need of an individual or to eliminate a specific anxiety.

Kinds of *tawassul fid-du'ā'*

This kind of intermediation is further divided into two kinds:

1. intermediation through words, and
2. intermediation without words.

1. Intermediation through words

> *In this form of intermediation, the name of the intermediary is mentioned (for the acceptance of a prayer and the fulfilment of a need and) to acquire the close access to Allah.*

During prayer to Allah, reference to a good deed or a saintly person serves as a kind of intermediation for the acceptance of that prayer. The petitioner does not need to specify the name of the intermediary, a mere reference to him is enough as is endorsed by Bukhārī, which is summarized below:

> "During journey, the entrance of the cave closed on them. All the three were virtuous men, one of them prayed to Allah by referring to his kindly treatment of his parents. The second man prayed by suggesting how he had managed to escape committing a sin though it was the easiest thing for him to do. The third man talked about how he had guarded the wages of a labourer for many years and paid him the money after a lapse of considerable time and then prayed. Their prayers were accepted as Allah removed the heavy stone that had closed the entrance of the cave."

2. Intermediation without words

When a good deed or a sacred place serves as a means of approach at the time of prayer to attain the nearness of Allah, this deed or place is endeared to Him. Even though

these are not given a strictly verbal form, they automatically serve as a source of intermediation.

It is also known as intermediation through action. It eliminates the use of the words during prayer. The petitioner either prays in the company of a saintly person or prays at a sacred place or he places a hallowed object in front of him and then prays to Allah for a favourable reception of his prayer.

The first instance of intermediation through action is attested by Zakariyyā's prayer at Maryam's place of worship, as it is stated by the Qur'ān:

> *At this place (Maryam's place of worship) Zakariyyā prayed to his Lord. He besought, "O my Master, bless me with children who are of sound moral character. There is no doubt that You hear our petitions."*[1]

In this verse, Allah has pinpointed the blessed act of Zakariyyā (عليه السلام). When he observed out-of-season fruit and other prized objects at Maryam's place who was being groomed by him as a trainee, he chose that particular spot for the submission of his prayer. Allah responded positively to his plea and he was blessed with Yahyā (عليه السلام) especially at a time when it was almost impossible for his wife to conceive a child.

---

1. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-'Imrān*) 3:38.

The second example is that of Yūsuf (عليه السلام) dispatching his shirt to his father Ya‘qūb (عليه السلام) for the restoration of his eyesight through the mediation of the shirt. Besides good deeds of the prophets and the righteous people, the relics associated with these personages can also act as instruments of intermediation, a topic that is proposed to be dealt with at length in the course of the book.

3. *at-Tawassul bid-du‘ā’*

In this kind of intermediation a person who is very close to Allah is requested to pray for the petitioner in order to relieve him of the worries and troubles that have turned his life into sheer torture. When this saintly person raises his hands in prayer, Allah, out of His infinite mercy, does not turn down his request, but acknowledges it as a proof of the fact that He holds His loyal servants so dear. Allah says:

> *And remember when you said, "O Mūsā, surely we will not remain content with only one kind of food (manna and quail), pray, then, to your Lord for us that He may bring forth for us of what the earth grows – of its herbs, and its cucumbers and its wheat and its lentils and its onions."*[1]

---

1. Qur'ān (*al-Baqarah*) 2:61.

In this verse, the words *fad‘u lanā rabbaka* (pray, then, to your Lord for us), are the source of intermediation. The followers of Mūsā (عليه السلام) are clearly asking him to pray for them to Allah. Since here *tawassul* is being relied upon through Mūsā’s prayer, this act is known as *tawassul bid-du‘ā’*.

4. *at-Tawassul bin-nidā’*

The petitioner himself submits his request to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) and uses him as a means in his supplication to seek Allah’s help. When he processes his petition through the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), it becomes a source of intermediation for Allah’s help. Ibn Kathīr says that on the occasion of the battle of Yamāmah, *yā Muhammadāh* (O Muhammad, help us), was the battle cry of the Muslims. He adds that during the war, Khālid bin Walīd picked up the flag, and passing through the army positions, set out towards the mountain of Musaylimah, the Liar. He waited there for him to turn up so that he could kill him. Then he returned and, standing between the two armies, he shouted:

> *“I am the son of Walīd. I am the son of ‘Āmir and Zayd.” And then he raised the battle cry current among the Muslims which was* “yā Muhammadāh” *(O Muhammad, help us).*[1]

1. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (5:30).

In this tradition the Muslims are relying on the Prophet (ﷺ) as a source of intermediation, and the Muslims who are committing this act are the Companions themselves. Thus to use the Prophet (ﷺ) as an intermediary was a practice of the Companions. Similarly, it is narrated by ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Abbās that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said:

> *Undoubtedly, there are some of Allah’s angels on the earth who are in addition to the guardian angels. They note down each leaf that falls down from a tree. If anyone of you is being tortured in the jungle, you should cry, “O servants of Allah, help me.”*[1]

Here, the Prophet (ﷺ) himself and in his own words instructs the Muslims to adopt intermediation as a means of seeking Allah’s help through His angels. He is advising us not to delink ourselves from those who not only believe in Allah but also practice their belief. In case there is no human figure to come to your rescue, you should pray to Allah through the mediation of the angels. Allah will command them to come to your help and fulfil your need. This universe is not a meaningless vacuum as many atheists in their ignorance tend to assume; it is filled with flights of angels though they remain invisible to the naked eye and whenever human beings under duress invoke the help of

---

1. Haythamī narrates it in *Majma‘-uz-zawā’id* (10:132) and says that its men are trustworthy.

Allah, the angels practically demonstrate the merciful presence of Allah by meeting human exigencies. Thus the words *falyunād a'īnū 'ibādallāh* are a clear proof that intermediation through the Prophet's intervention is permissible.

On the Day of Judgement, when the first and the last among the Muslims are in distress on account of the gruelling heat and judgement is yet to be pronounced, they will all rally round the prophets including the holy Prophet (ﷺ), and in their supplication to Allah will ask for their help. The tradition cited in different books bears testimony to the propriety and efficacy of this kind of intermediation. If this is permissible on the Day of Judgement, this should be equally permissible during our stay in this world. This reflects the kind-heartedness and benevolence of the prophets that the believers can depend on their mediation as a means of approach to the infinite mercy of Allah, whether we are on the earth or in the Hereafter.

The text of the tradition is as follows:

> *Narrated by ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Umar that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “A person constantly begs from other people till he on the Day of Judgement has no flesh on his face.” He added, “The sun will come closer to the people on the Day of Judgement. It will be so close that half of one’s ear will be drenched in sweat. In this condition, people will first seek the mediation of Adam, then of Mūsā and finally of Muhammad (ﷺ).” And ‘Abdullāh – the sub-narrator –added, “Layth narrated to me that Ibn Abū Ja‘far had narrated: He (the Prophet (ﷺ)) will intercede with Allah to judge amongst the people. Then he will leave here until he will hold the arc of the gate of Paradise. On that day, Allah will make him ascend the glorious station and all the people present there will sing his praises.*[1]

Mutual relation between intermediation, intercession and seeking aid

Another point worth noting in the context of intermediation is that when we request someone to act as our intermediary to Allah, it also seems to support the relevance of the related concepts of intercession and seeking help from

---

1. Bukhārī, *as-Sahīh*, b. of zakat (obligatory charity) ch.51 (2:536-7#1405); Tabarānī transmitted it in *al-Mu‘jam-ul-awsat* (9:331#8720); and Haythamī cited it in *Majma‘-uz-zawā’id* (10:371).

Allah's favourites. It means that when the relevance of intermediation has been proved, the relevance of other two concepts is automatically established. The following Qur'ānic verse clearly links the three concepts by explaining their mutually reinforcing role:

> *(O beloved!) And if they had come to you, when they had wronged their souls, and asked forgiveness of Allah, and the Messenger also had asked forgiveness for them, they (on the basis of this means and intercession) would have surely found Allah the Granter of repentance, extremely Merciful.*[1]

This Qur'ānic verse clearly argues in favour of intermediation. It means when people have committed sin, they should seek the mediation of the holy Prophet (ﷺ) in their supplication to Allah and the Prophet (ﷺ) also prays for their forgiveness, then they will find Allah Compassionate and Merciful.

Fastaghfarullāh argues for intercession. When Allah condoned their sin through the intercession of the Messenger (ﷺ), it means that intercession is validated by the Qur'ānic text. And the third concept of *istighāthah* is in fact a proof of seeking someone's assistance. When a man returns to the holy Prophet (ﷺ) for the forgiveness of his sins, it clearly means that he is asking for his intercession:

---

1. Qur'ān (*an-Nisā'*) 4:64.

"O, Messenger of Allah, I am a sinner. Have mercy on me and intercede for me before Allah so that He may condone my sins." This desire of the sinner, in fact, amounts to *istighāthah* (seeking help from others) while the Prophet's readiness to implore Allah for the forgiveness of his sins is intercession.

CHAPTER TWO

The Doctrine of *Tawassul*

(In the Light of Qur'ān)

In the last chapter it was discussed that *tawassul* and *wasīlah*, semantically speaking, are a means of approach to something; they are also instrumental in achieving nearness to someone. Since the object of life of a believer is to attain the proximity and pleasure of Allah, He has guided them at many occasions in the Holy Qur'ān to gain access to Him; and in the process, not only to satisfy their quest for truth but also to seek His pleasure. The search for truth and Allah's pleasure are interrelated. It obviously implies that the believer is not seeking the philosopher's truth, which is more or less abstract and lacks personal involvement. The truth that a believer is seeking must reflect his emotional involvement. This is a precondition for any favourable divine response, and when this condition is fulfilled, his quest is positively rewarded. He achieves three targets in a single leap of faith; he comes closer to truth, he satisfies his own craze for truth and at the same time he is able to receive Allah's pleasure, which is the ultimate aim of his life. Some of the Qur'ānic verses given below clearly prove how explicitly and without any ambiguity Allah has enjoined upon the believers to seek means of accessibility to Him for the fulfilment of their needs and desires and for leading a contented life on this earth.

Argument No. 1: Injunction for seeking means of approach

It is commanded by Almighty Allah as the holy Qur'ān states:

> *O believers! Fear Allah and seek means (of approach to) His (presence and to His nearness and accessibility) and strive in His way so that you may prosper.*[1]

The Qur'ānic verse stresses four things:

1. faith,
2. piety,
3. search for means of approach, and
4. struggle for Allah's sake.

First of all, the Qur'ān mentions faith. After faith it enjoins piety upon the believers because a heart laced with fear of Allah, is in fact a heart laced with His obedience. A man who possesses piety never disobeys Allah. Each moment of his life is spent in pleasing Him and, incidentally, all of his other concerns are pushed into the background. As a matter of fact, obeying the divine regulations becomes a part and parcel of his existence. Virtue and good deeds shape up as inseparable parts of his character and conduct. His desire to be close to Allah elevates him in His eyes. He is always engaged in acts that will earn him the pleasure of Allah and nearness to Him. The word *ittaqū* [derivative of *taqwā* (piety)] is a

1. Qur'ān (*al-Mā'idah*) 5:35.

comprehensive word and it embodies all acts that save him from Allah's displeasure and bring him closer to Him.

The third regulation stresses the search for means of approach. The Qur'ān says, "Seek means (of approach to) His (presence and to His nearness and accessibility)." Some of the religious scholars have interpreted *wasīlah* (the means of approach) mentioned in the Qur'ānic verse as faith and good deeds while others, who are in the majority, have explained the word as the prophets, the righteous and the favourites of Allah. They argue that the expression *ittaqullāh* subsumes faith, good deeds and all forms of worship. But the fact is that the verse enjoins upon the believers to search means of approach to Allah's presence. As far as faith and virtuous acts are the means of drawing close to Allah, the prophets and His favourites are ranked above all others. Thus, Shāh Walī Allah Muhaddith Dihlawī has explained *wasīlah* as allegiance to the guide[1] while Shāh Ismā'īl Dihlawī believes that *wasīlah* is the guide himself. He says:

> *It is almost impossible to receive (divine) guidance without the direction (provided) by the guide.*[2]

Referring to the same situation, Mawlānā Rūm believes that he has attained nearness to Allah on account of the company of Shams Tabrīzī.[3]

---

1. Shāh Walī Allah Muhaddith Dihlawī, *al-Qawl-ul-jamīl* (p.34).
2. Ismā'īl Dihlawī, *Sirāt mustaqīm* (p.58).
3. Mawlānā Rūm, *Mathnawī ma'nawī*.

The fourth regulation relates to jihad. Jihad also serves as a means to promote Islam, to strengthen and consolidate it and to implement divine injunctions. When, in the same Qur’ānic verse, faith, piety and struggle in the way of Allah are vested with legitimacy, the fourth regulation relating to *wasīlah* becomes automatically legitimate. Thus *wasīlah* does not amount to associating partners with Allah. Instead of encouraging polytheism among the believers, it rather reaffirms the Oneness of Allah. And, besides, when reliance on it is being confirmed by the Qur’ān itself, any objections or reservations against it are in fact a denial of the Qur’ānic truth.

Argument No. 2: Search for means of approach is a valid act

The holy Qur’ān has stated in another context:

> *Those, whom they worship (that is, the angels, jinn, ‘Īsā (عليه السلام) and ‘Uzayr (عليه السلام) etc., - they make their portraits and statues and worship them), they (themselves) seek nearness to their Lord, through those who among them are the nearest (to Allah’s presence), and they (themselves) hope for His mercy, and (themselves) fear His punishment. (Now you tell how can they deserve to be worshipped, they themselves*

> *are bowing before the truthful Lord.) Surely, the punishment of your Lord is a thing to be feared.*[1]

During the era of ignorance, the non-believers used to worship the angels, the jinn, 'Īsā (عليه السلام) and 'Uzayr (عليه السلام) by making their statues and portraits. Before the advent of Islam, the jinn had spared no effort to misguide human beings. They entered the statues and played bizarre tricks. The simple and naive people worshipped the statues when they saw them moving and smiling. But when the light of Islam dawned, the jinn sought forgiveness of Allah for their deeds of deviance and embraced Islam. They discarded their false notions and practices and followed the right path. They turned into loyal and obedient followers of Allah and were constantly in search of finding means of access to Him.

'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd comments that this Qur'ānic verse was specifically revealed in favour of an Arab community who worshipped a particular group of jinn. When these jinn converted to Islam and their worshippers were unaware of the fact of their conversion, Allah reminded them that those they used to worship were now prostrated before Him and were seeking means of approach to gain His nearness.[2]

This elaboration makes it clear that it is valid to rely on those who are near to Allah through their obedience and

---

1. Qur'ān (*al-Isrā'*) 17:57.
2. Bukhārī narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *tafsīr* (interpretation of the Qur'ān) ch.205 (4:1747-8#4437-8); Muslim in *as-Sahīh*, b. of *tafsīr*, ch.4 (4:2321#3030); Hākim in *al-Mustadrak* (2:362); and Baghawī cites it in *tafsīr* of 17:57 in *Ma'ālim-ut-tanzīl* (3:120).

acts of virtue. And those who are near to Allah further rely on those who are even nearer to Him, and it is a continuous process because the quest for nearness to Allah is an unending process. This also clearly implies that there are different degrees of nearness to Allah, the nearest degree enjoyed by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

This Qur'ānic verse clarifies beyond any particle of doubt that the gods worshipped by the non-believers and who called on them in their hour of distress are not in fact gods because they themselves are busy seeking the pleasure of Allah. If they had been gods themselves, as the non-believers ignorantly believed, they would not have been in need of worshipping someone else to seek his goodwill. In fact, they are as helpless as their worshippers and the obvious proof of their helplessness is their lack of self-reliance. The verse also clarifies the point that to seek access to Allah through those who have already attained nearness to Him is a valid act as this has also been the teaching and practice of these divine favourites. A question arises here how can those who themselves are seeking means of access to Allah possibly serve as means of approach to Him? A reflection on this Qur'ānic verse itself provides the answer: to worship anyone except Allah is forbidden but to rely on Allah's favourites and to request them to pray to Him for the fulfilment of one's needs is quite valid. It is a negation of worship, not a negation of means of approach to Allah. While it is valid only to worship Allah and no one else, it is also valid to seek the means of coming close to Him. Allah's favourites serve only as the means; they are not substitutes for Him. Therefore, it is correct to believe that all favourites of Allah

are only means of access to Him as it is Allah Alone Who is to be worshipped.

Argument No. 3: Intermediation through the holy Prophet (ﷺ)

There is another verse, which makes permissible to seek means of approach to Allah. As it is said:

> *(O beloved!) And if they had come to you, when they had wronged their souls, and asked forgiveness of Allah, and the Messenger also had asked forgiveness for them, they (on the basis of this means and intercession) would have found Allah the Granter of repentance, extremely Merciful.*[1]

This Qur'ānic verse commands all the believers to rely on the mediation of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in order to have their sins and lapses condoned by Allah. The relevance of this verse is not limited to his actual life on this earth but it also applies to his life after death. The exegetes and other leading scholars have also explained the meanings of the verse at length which will be dealt with elaborately in the third section of fifth chapter.

1. Qur'ān (*an-Nisā'*) 4:64.

Argument No. 4: Relief from distress through the holy Prophet (ﷺ) on the Day of Judgement

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is the dearest of Almighty Allah. That's why He blesses him the most. As it is stated:

> *Soon your Lord shall appoint you to the highest station in Paradise (that is, that high place of intercession where the former and the latter ones will return to him and glorify him).*[1]

Maqām mahmūd is the high and exalted place which is specified for the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) on the Day of Judgement as a divine acknowledgement of his glory and excellence. The purpose of his elevation to the high station is his intercession for the believers. It is proved by the Qur'ān and hadith that this form of intercession is the exclusive prerogative of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). On the Day of Judgement all the people, suffering from the agony of pain, will rally round the Prophet (ﷺ). They will request him to plead their case before Allah in order to expedite the process of their accountability to relieve them of the agonizing punishment. The undoubted and authentic traditions support the view that Allah, for the sake of His Prophet (ﷺ), will accelerate the act of accountability. Thus it is clear that even on the Day of Judgement all the people will make him as their intermediary to place their plea before Allah. This is the main object of his

1. Qur'ān (*al-Isrā'*) 17:79.

appointment to the specified high station in Paradise which is mentioned in this verse.

Argument No. 5: Steadfastness in guidance through the holy Prophet (ﷺ)

Allah says in surah *Āl-i-'Imrān:*

> *And how would you (now) disbelieve while you are (among those fortunate) that to you are rehearsed the verses of Allah, and His Messenger (himself) is in your midst? And whoever holds fast to Allah's (lap), is indeed guided towards the right path.*[1]

This Qur'ānic verse also pleads for intermediation. When we reflect on the words *wa fīkum rasūluh*, we come to realize that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is such source of intermediation who is blessed by Allah Himself to intercede for the people. It is on account of his God-given stature that he can persuade Allah to draw people out of the darkness of disbelief and bless them with the light of guidance. *Wa kayfa takfurūna* makes it further clear that to refrain from returning to disbelief is also made possible through the Prophet's mediation. The verse stresses two things, which are interlinked. People receive guidance through the mediation of the Prophet (ﷺ) and this

1. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-'Imrān*) 3:101.

guidance is strengthened and fortified again, through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). That is, both the reception of guidance and its sustenance are possible through the mediation of the Prophet. Allah is All-Powerful and it is within His power to guide anyone directly if He likes. But when he Himself says that He will keep us steadfast in guidance through the means of the Prophet (ﷺ), it is surely a clear proof of the fact that intermediation is a legitimate act.

Argument No. 6: Stalling of punishment through the mediation of the Prophet (ﷺ)

Allah says in the Qur'ān:

> *And (the fact of the matter is that) it is unbecoming of Allah to inflict punishment on them while (O exalted friend,) you are also (present) among them, nor will Allah punish them in a state while they are seeking forgiveness (from Him).*[1]

In this Qur'ānic verse the divine punishment may be stalled for two reasons:

1. The presence of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) among them.
2. Seeking forgiveness from Allah.

First of all, Allah stresses the point that He does not want to punish them because the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is present among them; and second, He withholds the

---

1. Qur'ān (*al-Anfāl*) 8:33.

punishment because they seek His forgiveness. What is to be noted here is the ordering of the two reasons. Allah gives priority to the presence of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). The verse clearly argues that as long as the Prophet (ﷺ) is present among them, Allah would withhold the punishment, which would have surely gripped them in his absence. Here the Prophet (ﷺ) is acting as an intermediary for his Ummah. Not only does Allah accept his mediation, but He also accords it primacy even over His Own forgiveness, and this is clearly supported by the way the two reasons for warding off punishment are arranged in this Qur'ānic verse. Some people, who interpret the word presence as mere physical presence, that is, his actual life-span on this earth, are quite mistaken. It is nothing but hair-splitting. Allah is not making any distinction between his life on this earth and his life after death. The word presence is in fact used in an inclusive sense. In the following pages I shall try to explain that this applied to his presence even before he was actually born into this world. Even before his birth, the Jews used to pray to God for their victory over the unbelieving Arabs through the mediation of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) as pointed out by Allah Himself:

> *Though before this they themselves (through the mediation of the last Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and the Qur'ān that was revealed to him) offered (the prayer) for victory over the non-believers.*[1]

---

1. Qur'ān (*al-Baqarah*) 2:89.

This Qur'ānic verse illustrates a Jewish practice, which is endorsed by the Qur'ān and all the exegetes and experts on hadith have made it as a basis of their arguments.[1] It means that the fact has been collectively acknowledged that if the people in the past could rely on the mediation of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) for the fulfilment of their needs, it becomes not only valid, but even more strictly binding, for the Muslim community to continue a time-hallowed tradition.

Argument No. 7: Zakariyyā's use of Maryam's place of worship as means

Allah says:

> *And her supervision was given to Zakariyyā. Whenever Zakariyyā entered her place of worship, he found with her (the latest and freshest) items of food. He asked, "O Maryam, where do these things come to you from?" She said, "This (food) comes from Allah." Surely, Allah gives to whomsoever He wishes without measure.*[2]

In the next verse Allah has mentioned Zakariyyā's prayer at this very spot:

---

1. Complete discussion on the topic is in chapter 5, section 1.
2. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-'Imrān*) 3:37.

> *At that very place Zakariyyā prayed to his Lord. He requested, "My Master! Give me from Yourself pure offspring. Surely You are the Hearer of prayer."*[1]

Rectification of an error

It may be assumed here that whenever Zakariyyā (ﷺ) visited Maryam's room to ask about her health, he found all kinds of out-of-season fruit and one day he just thought of praying, presuming that the Lord, who could send out-of-season fruit to Maryam, had also the power to bless him with the offspring in his old age, and as he thought of this, he there and then offered prayer. One can say he had prayed to Allah and it had nothing to do whatsoever with the spot at which he prayed. But this view appears to be unreasonable as it gives rise to a number of questions:

1. Had Zakariyyā (ﷺ) never prayed in the past?
2. Why had Zakariyyā's prayer been granted only then?
3. Why had Zakariyyā (ﷺ) chosen that particular spot for his prayer? Did he consider it more sacred than some other spots?
4. Why did the Qur'ān stress praying at that very place?

Qur'ān itself has rectified the error and eliminated uncertainty by using the word *hunālika* (there). When we reflect on the words of the Qur'ānic verse, we realize that it was Zakariyyā's routine that he woke up in the later part of

1. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-'Imrān*) 3:38.

the night and prayed to his Lord. According to his routine, even on that day he woke up to offer his prayer, but instead of praying at his usual place of worship, he chose specifically the chamber in which Maryam lived. If he had offered his prayer only by accident and not by design, the insertion of the word *hunālika* would have been superfluous and insignificant. Such an interpretation is not only a misreading of the Qur'ānic message but also a violation of its spirit, which discourages and condemns all forms of superfluity. Thus the choice of that particular spot is an act of intermediation and at the same time it is a confirmation of the fact that a sacred spot can also serve as a source of intermediation.

Immediate acceptance of prayer through mediation

Allah has described the acceptance of prayer through mediation in the following Qur'ānic verse:

> *He still stood praying in the chamber (or he was simply imploring the Lord) that the angels called to him: surely, Allah gives you glad tidings of (son) Yahyā.*[1]

When Zakariyyā (عليه السلام) chose that sacred spot for his prayer, and then offered his prayer, his prayer was instantly granted. This fact clearly proves that Allah likes intermediation through his favourite servants and the proof

1. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-'Imrān*) 3:39.

of His appreciation appears in the form of the paryer's acceptance. The stress is laid not only on acceptance, but also on the immediacy of acceptance. It means that the prayer through mediation is not only granted, but it is also immediately granted.

Argument No. 8: Return of Ya'qūb's eyesight through the mediation of Yūsuf's shirt

Allah says in surah *Yūsuf:*

> *(Yūsuf said,) "Take my shirt and lay it on the face of my father (Ya'qūb), he will regain his sight."*[1]

The Qur'ān has expressed the later development in these words:

> *When the bearer of glad tidings arrived, he laid the shirt on the face of Ya'qūb and his sight returned immediately.*[2]

This Qur'ānic verse clearly proves that intermediation through any object associated with the prophets and the saints does not negate the Islamic concept of divine unity. In this case the sender of the shirt is a prophet, the one who is benefiting from this act of intermediation is also a prophet and the one who is describing the act, are all parts

---

1. Qur'ān (*Yūsuf*) 12:93.
2. Qur'ān (*Yūsuf*) 12:96.

of a sacred phenomenon authenticated by the Qur'ān itself. Therefore, to express any doubts and reservations about its authenticity is to deny the sanctity of an act which is being sanctified by no less an authority than the Qur'ān. This Qur'ānic verse actually stresses the following points:

1. First, though from the point of view of *jā'-al-bashīr*, this form of intermediation is apparently without the direct involvement of a prophet, it actually takes place through the physical use of one of his relics, i.e. one of the objects associated with him.
2. Second, since the bearer of glad tidings did not utter a word as he laid the shirt on the face of Ya'qūb (عليه السلام), therefore, the return of the eyesight through the means of the shirt is a form of intermediation without words.
3. Third, to rely on someone who is not a prophet is also one of the traditional practices of the prophets and to declare the practice of the prophets as a form of disbelief is nothing but a reflection of malice, ignorance and lack of understanding on the part of those who boastfully, and sometimes out of sheer flaunting arrogance, indulge in fabricating such false allegations. In the Qur'ānic verse Allah is expressing the form of intermediation practised by two great prophets, Ya'qūb (عليه السلام) and Yūsuf (عليه السلام). No Muslim can deny the reality of intermediation in the presence of such a clearly described tradition. If there had been any ambiguity or semantic twist in its expression, they might have had some basis of doubt. But when the argument is so explicit, any doubt about its veracity is nothing but an ugly concoction. Besides, the most significant point stressed by the Qur'ānic verse is that one prophet,

Yūsuf (عليه السلام), is issuing the injunction of intermediation and the other prophet, Ya‘qūb (عليه السلام), is receiving the benefit from this act of intermediation. It means the shirt here serves as the source of intermediation. Therefore, if it is valid to practice intermediation through a prophet’s shirt, its practice through the relics of the prophets and the saints is automatically validated.

Real meaning of supernatural causes

It means that if an act takes place without the factors or causes which are necessary for its manifestation or occurrence, it is called a supernatural act, for example, the birth of ‘Īsā (عليه السلام), because the birth of a person is caused by a number of factors. If these factors are absent, the question of birth does not arise. But in the case of the birth of ‘Īsā (عليه السلام), these factors are glaringly absent, i.e. the fact of birth without the presence of the opposite gender and, therefore, it can be explained only as a result of supernatural causes.

It is generally said that mediation for supernatural acts is disbelief while it is permissible in the case of natural acts. This concept derives from the ignorance of people about the true definition of supernatural causes. These people are guided only by a superficial definition, which suggests that any phenomenon that is not adequately explained by the world of causes is supernatural and that which falls within its scope is natural. In order to understand its true nature the example of the return of Ya‘qūb’s eyesight seems to be quite apt. If the restoration of vision comes about as a result of medical treatment or surgical operation, it will fall within the ambit of the causes and if the rehabilitation of eyesight takes place as a result

of merely placing the shirt on the face, it will fall beyond the influence of causes which is generally described as a supernatural phenomenon. This brief discussion proves that:

1. If an effect occurs without causes, it is a supernatural effect.
2. Intermediation through the supernatural causes is endorsed by the Qur'ān and proved by the practice of the prophets.
3. *Idhhabū bi-qamīsī* does not rely on any kind of supplication nor on any medicine; it only records the recovery of eyesight through the physical application of the shirt. Therefore, it provides an illustration of intermediation through the supernatural causes. If this kind of intermediation were a negation of beliefs the Qur'ān would never have permitted it because it condemns all kinds of disbelief.

Here another point is clamouring for our attention, and that is to declare valid an act of intermediation which is engineered by natural cause and to declare it invalid because it is brought about by supernatural causes is in itself a kind of self-invented classification, which is supported neither by the Qur'ānic verses nor by the authentic traditions of the prophets. The correct Islamic belief is that the real cause and helper is Allah Himself. No one shares His qualities and attributes because, in view of His uniqueness, any effort to associate partners with Him is not only impracticable but also inconceivable. Disbelief is disbelief at any place and in any context of situation. Whether you sugar-coat it or present it as an ambiguous temptation, it remains disbelief.

Natural and supernatural causes operate on entirely different planes: while natural causes relate to outward effects, supernatural causes relate to inner and spiritual effects. There are a large number of issues in our lives, which are resolved through natural causes, but there are some issues, which are resolved internally and spiritually without any recourse to outer and material causes. The fact is that no effect is without a cause; only in some cases the cause is manifest while in other cases it remains hidden and it is revealed only to persons with gifted insight. If an act happens without any apparent reliance on visible causes, it is also really not without a cause; only the cause remains generally invisible.

The gist of the discussion is that if we condemn intermediation as a form of disbelief in supernatural matters, it would be a direct violation of the Qur'ānic injunctions and the traditional practices of the prophets. For example, when Jibrīl (عليه السلام) at Allah's behest, appeared before Maryam in human guise in connection with the birth of 'Īsā (عليه السلام), he addressed her in these words:

> *I have been only sent by your Lord. (I have come because) I should bless you with a pure son.*[1]

In this Qur'ānic verse Jibrīl (عليه السلام) is attributing to himself the blessing of the son which is absolutely unsupported by external causes, i.e. to bless her with a son without the presence of a father with just a puff of air is

1. Qur'ān (*Maryam*) 19:19.

only a supernatural act. But in this dialogue, one of Allah's superior angels is performing the act of intermediation. Therefore, Qur'ānic verses cannot be falsified on the basis of a self-coined belief. Intermediation is a Qur'ānic fact and it is a legal act.

Argument No. 9: Self-humiliation and helplessness as a form of means

Extreme self-humiliation, self-deflation, modesty and helplessness are recommended means to crush one's ego. If someone prays to Allah in a state of self-laceration, his emotional and mental state serves as a means to gain access to Allah Who is deeply moved by the purity and intensity of his prayer and grants his request.

The prayers of the Companions and the saints were invariably effective because in their prayers they demeaned themselves, lowered their egos and approached Allah in an absolutely humble frame of mind. They shed all their pretensions and placed themselves completely at the will and mercy of their Lord. The prayers of Abū Bakr, 'Alī, Zayn-ul-'Ābidīn and 'Abd-ul-Qādir Jīlānī gush out of a similar state of humility and self-lashing.

The same philosophy forms the basis of intermediation. Something is offered to Allah in one's prayer as a support to enhance its chances of acceptance, rather it persuades Allah to grant it even when He is disinclined to do so. It awakens His mercy and He softens towards the prayee and fulfils his desire. Anything which acts as means must either be a sacred deed or some righteous person who enjoys Allah's blessings. It is on account of his personal sanctity as an intermediary that Allah is moved to accept the prayer,

as Allah befriends those who seek His pleasure and He never lets them down. So the granting of the prayer through such an intermediary is an indirect acknowledgement of his virtue and piety. Therefore, those who try to raise these agents of intermediation to the level of divine partners are the victims of rational purblindness. How can a person, who himself is a humble servant of the Lord, and whose very survival and integrity depends on His pleasure, ever imagine to excel Him? This is only a malicious disfigurement of reality.

It is recorded in the Qur'ān that when Adam (عليه السلام) committed the error, he besought Allah, stressing his helplessness and his lowly state:

> *O our Lord! We have committed excess against our lives. If You did not forgive us and (did not) take mercy on us, we will surely be among the losers.*[1]

In this prayer, Adam (عليه السلام) has offered his own helplessness and his utter sense of alienation as a source of intermediation and asked for Allah's mercy and forgiveness. The authentic traditions also indicate that Adam (عليه السلام) also offered the mediation of the holy Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) for the acceptance of his prayer and, as a result, he was blessed with Allah's forgiveness.

---

1. Qur'ān (*al-A'rāf*) 7:23.

Argument No. 10: Prayer for the entire Ummah as a source of intermediation

If one does not pray only for oneself as expressed in the words 'O Allah, have mercy on me,' but prays for the entire community as expressed in the words 'O Allah, have mercy on us – the entire community,' this mode of prayer in itself becomes a source of intermediation. It is stated in the holy Qur'ān:

> *O our Lord! Now forgive our sins and efface our mistakes (from our recorded deeds) and give us death in the company of virtuous people.*[1]

Argument No. 11: Addition of the word *Rabb* to the names of the righteous as a form of means

The prayer proves effective if the word *Rabb* is added to the name of a righteous person. For example, if one addresses Allah as Muhammad's Lord or as the Lord of some saint or virtuous person, the prayer gains in effectiveness and itself becomes an agent of intermediation. The Qur'ān says:

1. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-'Imrān*) 3:193.

> *And, through your mercy, make me among the righteous who are close to You.*[1]

Allah says in regard to those who have attained His pleasure through noble acts and pious deeds and, therefore, have achieved a level of self-contentment rarely available to human beings on this earth. These are the people who remain unruffled and unhinged even when the winds blow harshly, the heat wave is sizzlingly inhospitable and the cold is biting. As the Qur'ān states:

> *O contented self! Return to your Lord in such a state that you should seek His pleasure as well as be the object of His pleasure (as if you desire His pleasure and He desires your pleasure). So join My tested servants and enter My Paradise (of nearness and presence).*[2]

This Qur'ānic verse relates to a person who is about to hear the glad tidings of Allah's mercy, kindness and nearness. Allah is proud of his obedience. He actually gloats over his perseverance and sincerity in His service. This man does not indulge his desires, rather he sacrifices them for the collective happiness of the people. Each moment of his life is focused on seeking Allah's pleasure. He crushes all those desires which tend to deflect his concentration from righteous and pious deeds. Each phase of his life is a confirmation of his faith in Allah, not a

1. Qur'ān (*an-Naml*) 27:19.
2. Qur'ān (*al-Fajr*) 89:27-30.

deviation from it. He is not under the thumb of his self, rather his self is under his thumb and even the devil is scared of seducing him because he knows that all his efforts to derail him from the track of virtue are doomed to failure. He sacrifices his comforts to win Allah's pleasure. He is totally in the infinite goodness of his Lord and this immersion in virtue becomes a guarantee of his survival and a source of that self-renewing contentment which brings him increasingly closer to Allah. He achieves a level of self-satisfaction which is denied to the common run of people and he presents a perfect model of submission to the will of the Lord. His own desires, which are usually self-seeking, are pushed into the background and his leading light is the will and pleasure of Allah. He is, in reality, one of those honoured and exalted persons with whom Allah is totally pleased. As a result, there is no dividing line between such a person and the Lord Himself. When he speaks, it seems as if the Lord is speaking through him; when he talks, it sounds as if the Lord is talking through him; when he walks, it appears as if the Lord Himself is walking; even his hearing turns into a divine act of hearing. In short, there is complete identity between him and the Lord because a person who has achieved this level of self-control shall never indulge in an act that can clash with the will and pleasure of the Lord. He has been tested and retested by Allah; as a result of his stresses and tribulations Allah has vested him with such a high status. Therefore, if one approaches Allah through people like him and say, "O Lord of the righteous," His mercy bubbles over and grants the prayee's wish. At that time He is not concerned about the status of the petitioner; He is rather concerned about the

status of His own loyal servants who have attained His pleasure. Therefore, to approach Allah through the righteous people is also one of the practices of the Prophet (ﷺ). After the Fajr prayer, the Prophet (ﷺ) used to pray:

O Lord of Jibrīl, and Mīkā'īl, and Isrāfīl and Muhammad! I seek Your protection from the fire of Hell.[1]

Shaykh Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī said, "Its specific mention in his *du'ā'* is understood as *tawassul*, as if he were saying, "O Allah, I ask You and I seek Jibrīl (Gabriel), Isrāfīl, Mikā'īl (Michael) and Muhammad the Prophet (ﷺ) as means to You."[2]

Argument No. 12: Intermediation through remembering the Lord

Allah says:

1. Hākim narrated it in *al-Mustadrak* (3:622) through Usāmah bin 'Umayr; Tabarānī in *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (1:195#520); and Haythamī in *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (2:219). Nasā'ī also narrated it with a few different words through 'Ā'ishah in his *Sunan* (8:278); Ahmad bin Hambal in *Musnad* (6:61); and Haythamī in *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (10:104, 110).
2. Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī, *Mafāhīm yajib an tusahhah* (p.153).

And (such) are these people that when they commit a foul deed or wrong their own lives, remember Allah and implore forgiveness for their sins. And who can forgive sins except Allah?[1]

This Qur'ānic verse proves that when a man commits sins and his life is soiled with smutty deeds, then intermediation through the remembrance of Allah can serve as a source of forgiveness of his sins.

Argument No. 13: Intermediation through remembering the prophets and the saints

To remember people whom Allah loves and who are very close to Him on account of their virtuous acts is also a form of intermediation. Surah *al-Fātihah* has listed a number of righteous persons who can serve as intermediaries for Allah's blessings because these are the people whom He has rewarded with special gifts – they are, in fact, the prized ones in the divine estimation. The Qur'ān states:

The path of those on whom You bestowed blessings.[2]

At another occasion, the holy Qur'ān describes the details of the people on whom His blessings have been bestowed:

1. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-'Imrān*) 3:135.
2. Qur'ān (*al-Fātihah*) 1:6.

And whoso obeys Allah and Messenger (ﷺ) shall be among those (on the Day of Judgement) upon whom Allah has bestowed His (special) blessings – the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs and the righteous – and they are an excellent company.[1]

Surah *al-Fātihah* contains all forms of intermediation. As a matter of fact, the entire surah is an act of intermediation as it is the essence of the Qur'ān. It encourages the followers to approach Allah through the divine unity, Prophethood and other pious persons. But, here, in this verse, intermediation through the righteous people is recommended because these are the ones with whom Allah is pleased.

Argument No. 14: Intermediation through Allah's blessings

Allah says:

And remember Allah's that blessing on you. When you were (each other's) enemies but He created love in your hearts and you

1. Qur'ān (*an-Nisā'*) 4:69.

became brothers on account of His blessing.[1]

And another occasion, He says:

And if you wish to count Allah's blessings, you won't be able to count them completely. Surely, Allah is infinitely Forgiving, extremely Merciful.[2]

You should remember Allah's blessings and after remembering these blessings seek His forgiveness and you will find Him infinitely Forgiving. The Qur'ānic verse elucidates the fact that the remembrance of Allah's blessings activates His attribute of mercy. A prayer, therefore, which is based on recalling His blessings and His kindness, can serve as an agent of intermediation by offering itself as the petitioner's expression of gratitude for the inexhaustible kindnesses of the Lord and is finally granted by Him. The Qur'ān itself bears witness to its effectiveness:

If you are grateful, then I will increase (blessings) on you.[3]

Argument No. 15: Intermediation through the Lord's promise

Allah has made a number of promises to the followers of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). If these promises are remembered

1. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-'Imrān*) 3:103.
2. Qur'ān (*an-Nahl*) 16:18.
3. Qur'ān (*Ibrāhīm*) 14:7.

in a mood of concentration and offered as means while praying, the prayer will be granted by Allah. The holy Qur'ān states:

> *O our Lord! Bless us with all that which You have promised through Your messengers, and do not humiliate us on the Day of Judgement. Surely You do not go back on Your promise.*[1]

The petitioner in his prayer addresses the Lord. He has committed many sins and perpetrated a number of foul deeds but he is now conscious of his sullied career and in a spirit of total humility surrenders himself to the overflowing mercy of the Lord saying: O Allah! Our deeds are not such that we deserve Your mercy and forgiveness, therefore, we pray to You through Your messengers that may You keep us safe from the gruelling and scorching heat and horrors of the Day of Judgement. We are holding fast to your exalted prophets, we are following in their footsteps and we are following the faith they have taught us. Your prophets have also taught us that keeping on to our faith is a means of our salvation and we believe in it sincerely. Therefore, show us Your promise as daylight because You always fulfil Your promises.

1. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-'Imrān*) 3:194.

CHAPTER THREE

Rejection of Objections against *Tawassul*

In the last chapter I have made reference to only a few verses out of hundreds of Qur'anic verses to explain the concept of *tawassul*, which have helped in removing the film of confusion and misconception that had enveloped it over decades of prejudiced and semi-scholarly fumbling. If we reflect on these divine injunctions in the light of a correct understanding of the spirit of our religion, we will not only be able to grasp the crux of Islamic faith but this will also automatically serve to clarify a number of misunderstandings that have gathered round the concept. It will sort out the grain from the chaff, differentiating people with correct and balanced understanding from those whose interpretation is askew and exclusive. In this chapter I shall attempt to answer the baseless objections which have been levelled against the validity of *tawassul* as a religious concept and establish its true meaning in the light of the reasoning furnished by the Qur'an and the hadith. Therefore, this chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, correct meanings of the Qur'anic verses are given which are made a basis of arguments against *tawassul* through flagrant misinterpretation. In the second section, a correct assessment shall emerge as a result of the form of intermediation followed by the prophets and the saints, particularly in response to an objection, but strictly in the light of the reasoning provided by Shariah.

SECTION ONE

Rectification of doubts and errors

First objection: *Tawassul* is not valid through another person

Some people deny the valid status of intermediation through the holy Prophet (ﷺ) by suggesting that it is not an act performed by the petitioner himself. It is invalid because it is not based on a personal act. These people believe that only a personal good deed can act as a source of intermediation. They cite the following Qur'anic verses to justify the invalidity of intermediation through another person:

Each man gets what he strives for.[1]

And anyone who bears a burden shall not bear the burden of another man.[2]

1. Qur'an (*an-Najm*) 53:39.
2. Qur'an (*al-An'ām*) 6:164.

> *It is rewarded for whatever good it earned and it is punished for whatever sin it earned.*[1]

Correct Stand on *tawassul* through another person

This is based on the valid premise that in addition to the petitioner, another's act can also serve as a source of intermediation. The Qur'anic verses which are marshalled as arguments against the reality of intermediation are all related to deeds and the reward or punishment for those deeds. They are not related to prayer, the acceptance of prayer and struggle to attain the nearness of Allah by seeking means of approach to Him. In the case of intermediation, a beloved object or a sacred person is offered as a means for the fulfilment of one's need. But these Qur'anic verses are not even marginally concerned with the theme of intermediation. Therefore, to quote them as a justification for the irrelevance of intermediation is both a logical and a semantic error. Besides, their transposition from one context to the other also leads to their contextual distortion, which amounts to disrespect and sacrilege. In fact, to fit a Qur'anic verse into a preconceived slot is the height of perversity and is not becoming of any well-meaning Muslim.

The verse mentioned first simply means that whatever man receives is a consequence of what he has done. It is a

1. Qur'an (*al-Baqarah*) 2:286.

reward or punishment for his actions, it does not involve any other person as it revolves around the acts of a single individual. No other individual, whether he is a relative or a stranger, is associated with these acts. Their commission and their consequences, whether they are favourable or unfavourable, exclusively apply to the individual concerned. While, in a discussion of intermediation, the act and its implications of reward and punishment do not come into the picture at all: it is only related to prayer; and at the time of prayer seeking someone else for its acceptance constitutes an act of intermediation.

Similarly, the second mentioned verse relates to the burden of sin. It highlights the theme of accountability. It means that we all bear burdens but these burdens are our own. They relate to our own selves, to our own errors, and to our own sins, and we cannot bear the burden of others. They are accountable for their sins while we are accountable for our sins. The two kinds of burden are not interchangeable; they are mutually exclusive. Thus the Qur'anic verse transparently applies the process of accountability, which will be based on a comprehensive evaluation of our acts. It has nothing to do whatsoever with the act of intermediation. Therefore, to spin it out unnecessarily and to fit it into the straitjacket of intermediation with which it is not even remotely related, is to disfigure its application, which comes close to a form of heresy.

The third verse relates to commission and consequence. This brief explanation makes it clear that all these Qur'anic verses, from the thematic as well as the semantic point of view, are extraneous to the discussion of intermediation.

The following tradition is an irrefutable argument in support of the act of intermediation:

> *It is attributed to Abū Hurayrah that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: When a person dies, his acts are disconnected but three acts are not disconnected: continuing charity, knowledge that benefits mankind and pious children who pray for him.*[1]

From the point of view of the tradition, even death cannot terminate these three human acts and man will continue to receive their reward and recompense even after his death:

1. The first of these acts is the continuing act of charity. For example, someone constructs a mosque or an educational institution or a road or hospital; or finances a campaign or an organization for the dissemination and resurgence of Islamic faith; or funds a struggle for the welfare of the poor and the needy, he will continue to receive their reward as long as they survive.

---

1. Muslim narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *wasiyyah* (will) ch.3 (3:1255#1631); Abū Dāwūd in *Sunan*, b. of *wasāyā* (wills and testaments), 3:117 (#2880); Nasā'ī in *Sunan,* b. of *wasāyā* (6:251); Tirmidhī in *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *akhām* (judgements) ch.36 (3:660#1376) and graded it *hasan* (fair) and *sahīh* (sound); Ahmad bin Hambal in *Musnad* (2:372); Bayhaqī in *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (6:278); Baghawī in *Sharh-us-sunnah* (1:300#139) and declared it *sahīh*; and Muhammad Khatīb Tabrīzī in *Mishkāt-ul-masābīh*, b. of *'ilm* (knowledge), 1:104 (#203).

2. Similarly, beneficial knowledge. For example, a scholar teaches someone and he continues to teach others, or he writes a book on religion or some branch of knowledge or does research for any useful work for Allah's pleasure. As long as his ideas are transmitted to mankind through his pupils and work, and human beings benefit from them or that book remains a part of the syllabi of various universities in the world and the people find it positively rewarding, he will continue to reap the reward of his efforts.
3. There is an agreement on the continuing act of charity, and beneficial knowledge that they can act as sources of intermediation but the tradition also refers to pious children. They can also serve as an act of continuing charity for their parents. Their good deeds are a source of benefit to the parents even after death. As a matter of fact, the acts of the pious children constitute an act performed by someone else but they serve as a source of intermediation for the parents.

It should be noted here that good deeds are being performed by the children but they are serving as a means of salvation for the parents after their death. This example proves that the act of one man benefits another man. The act of continuing charity was his personal act, which will continue to benefit him as long as the act continues. Similarly, through his knowledge and research, he disseminated virtue and guidance. This was also his personal act and he will continue to receive its reward, both in this world and the next. But the good deeds of his children are not his deeds, and yet he is garnering their reward. Those pious deeds are now serving as the means of

the parents' redemption. Thus, this tradition proves the fact that one's own good deeds are not the only means of intermediation but the deeds of others can also play this role and benefit the other person.

Second objection: Good deeds of one's children are not deeds of others

Those who cling to the principle that only one's own acts are the valid means and the acts of others are invalid as means, interpret the tradition in a different sense altogether. They say that a good child is surely his son and shares his lineage, but it is the upbringing of his father that has turned him into a pious person. Therefore, whatever the son does will be directly considered his own act. Whatever good deeds he performs will automatically benefit his father and, therefore, they will be regarded his own unmediated deeds. And they cite the following tradition as a clinching argument for their interpretation:

> *Whosoever sets a good precedent in Islam, there is a reward for him for this (act of goodness) and the reward of that also who acted after him according to its subsequence.*[1]

1. Muslim, *as-Sahīh* b. of zakat (obligatory charity) ch.20 (2:705#1017); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (4:357 & 359); Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (4:175); and Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *Fath-ul-bārī* (13:302).

Correct view

This is in fact a misinterpretation of the tradition. This is their modus operandi in understanding the import of traditions. They twist their meanings out of shape and focus on the sense that suits their fallacious point of view. It is their normal practice to decontextualize the traditions and dress them in robes tailored by their whims and runaway fancies. Thus the meanings they draw out of the traditions are absolutely unrelated to their themes. If the reader or the listener is mentally alert, he/she will at once come to know the reality of the situation, but a common reader or listener is generally flustered by these misinterpretations.

This is part of their conscious design to mislead the credulous people. The common man, on account of his ignorance and lack of understanding, is easily swayed by their highly capricious, rather malicious, explanations, and treats them as correct interpretations of the Qur'anic verses. In such a state of affairs he will remain a victim of ambiguity or uncertainty unless he turns for clarification to a religious scholar who is gifted with both vision and knowledge to interpret them correctly and in the right spirit in which they were revealed. Allah says:

> *So you should ask people of knowledge if you yourselves do not know (about something).*[1]

It is not being discussed in this tradition whether the good deeds of the children are also the good deeds of the

1. Qur'an (*an-Nahl*) 16:43.

parents or not. What is being discussed is the clear and untwisted fact that the good deeds of the children not only benefit themselves but they also benefit their parents although these have not been performed by them. It makes it further clear that after the death of the parents, children will perform good deeds for their personal benefit alone (which of course is the motive behind these deeds). But their parents will also receive a share of the reward which logically ensues from the commission of good deeds. Similarly, a number of Qur'anic verses are cited by these malevolent scholars to reject the concept of intermediation and to bring home to the gullible people that it is not permissible in Islam. One of these verses is as follows:

And (O beloved,) when My servants ask you about Me, (tell them,) "I am Near. I answer the caller whenever he calls Me. So they should obey and have (firm) faith in Me so that they may find the (right path)."[1]

To draw the inference from this Qur'anic verse that to call anyone except Allah is improper as Allah Himself hears the call and acknowledges it with His blessing, is quite incorrect. The correct position is that it is Allah Alone Who listens to people's prayers and grants them; it is He Alone Who fulfils our needs. But it is also quite proper to

1. Qur'an (*al-Baqarah*) 2:186.

process these prayers through some prophet or saint to expedite their acceptance as it has been debated in the last chapter at length.

The following Qur'anic verses are also offered as argument against the validity of intermediation and intercession:

> *And fear the day when no soul shall serve as a substitute for another soul, nor shall intercession (of a person) be accepted for it (who does not have Allah's permission), nor shall any money (as ransom) be taken from it, nor shall (against Allah's will) they be helped.*[1]

You should keep in mind that all the Qur'anic verses, which are supposed to deny the relevance of intercession are meant only for the non-believers and hypocrites who are the fuel of the hell. These are not meant for the believers, as the theme of intercession is relevant only to them. The non-believers are not even marginally concerned with them because the fact of intercession is, first of all, related to belief. And if one is deprived of this precious asset either through perversity or as a result of some divine curse, or if someone possesses it but it fluctuates like the flame of a flickering candle or it is wobbly as jelly, intercession will have no value for him. Therefore, intercession is being devalued or negated for the non-

1. Qur'an (*al-Baqarah*) 2:48.

believers. The implication is, and there is sound logic behind it, that when these non-believers do not subscribe even to the basic values of Islam, how can they be expected to appreciate the phenomena like intercession and intermediation. Therefore, the value of intercession is directly based on the value of faith. Since the non-believers reject the faith, it is only logical for them to reject intercession. But the believers accept faith as well as what is derived from it. Thus, on the Day of Judgement, the prophets and the righteous will intercede for their followers, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) will be appointed to the highest station to make intercession a reality and the non-believers will be wailing and crying in an agony of repentance, ignorance and missed opportunities. As it is stated:

> *So (today) we have no intercessor nor any bosom friend.*[1]

They have no one who will intercede on their behalf, nor anyone who can put in a word of recommendation for them. They are friendless on a day when the need for a friend is agonizingly felt. They are stranded and completely alienated. All they can do is cry and wail. Their cries are a proof of the fact of intercession on the Day of Judgement. If there were no intercession, the non-believers would not have cried; on the other hand, they would have exulted in the baseless expectations of the believers, their cries would have been replaced by fits of ridicule and sarcasm. Thus

---

1. Qur'an (*ash-Shu'arā'*) 26:100-1.

their moaning and wailing proves the truth of intercession through this Qur'anic verse. It means all the promised and positive things will be there, but the non-believers will look only wistfully at them, as they will be inaccessible to them. Only the believers will benefit from them.

Therefore, to apply the Qur'anic verses to the believers, which were actually revealed for the non-believers and were meant to be applied to them is both improper and perverse. Our sense of propriety demands that we should distinguish between believers and non-believers because it is this basic distinction that decides the division and distribution of rewards and punishments. Therefore, these verses cannot be made as the basis of arguments against the reality of intercession. If intercession is not allowed to the non-believers as a favour and a concession, it does not follow that it is also disallowed to the believers. Thus intercession is a fact but it is exclusively reserved for the believers.

Need for a correct understanding of Qur'anic verses

It is extremely vital to clearly grasp the meanings of Qur'anic verses, especially those which deal with delicate problems. To determine their context and then to explain their genesis and application within these contextual bounds results in a sound interpretation of these verses as well as a clarification of the niggling issues they are revealed to explicate. To fix these bounds of sanity is even more relevant in the present sectarian and polemical environment where each sect tries to browbeat the other sect, and does not hesitate to twist the meaning of a

Qur'anic verse out of shape to make his opponent lick the dust. In their sectarian frenzy they do not seem to realize that they are doing a great disservice to their faith. In most cases, their egotistical concerns drive out religious concerns and they bend and twirl the meanings of these verses to pamper their bloated selves. Therefore, in such a situation it is necessary to determine the contextual and semantic range and relevance of a Qur'anic verse. In this regard the collective consensus of sound religious scholars and exegetes should be kept in mind, and any interpretation that strays too far from the text or highlights only marginal issues as a purely innovative exercise, should either be discarded altogether or downplayed to minimize its significance. Such interpretations, posing to be modernistic, are generally inspired by malicious motives to strike at the solid moorings of our faith. Therefore, all such interpretations should be discouraged and one way to discourage them is to be indifferent to them. In this way, the Muslims will learn to follow the correct interpretation and gradually this attitude will moderate the unnecessary tensions that exist between various sects.

Third objection: To attain nearness to Allah, *tawassul* is invalid as worship of anyone except Allah is invalid

One objection against *tawassul* is based on the following reasoning:

The non-believers used to say, while worshipping the idols, that they worshipped them to attain nearness to Allah. Just as worshipping idols in order to be close to Allah is an invalid act, similarly if someone relies on an

intermediary to be near to Him, it will also be regarded as invalid. In support of their argument, they offer the following Qur'anic verse:

We worship them merely because they may bring us near to Allah.[1]

This holy verse makes it clear that the non-believers worshipped the idols to attain nearness to Allah; they did not treat them as the creator. It only served as a means of accessibility to Allah but Allah rejected this form of intermediation.

Reply: Worship of non-Allah cannot be proved by the argument for intermediation

The fact is that the Qur'anic verse neither denies nor rejects intermediation. This kind of reasoning against the validity of intermediation is based on sheer ignorance and prejudice. This Qur'anic verse is specifically revealed to reject the worship of anyone except Allah, and no form of reasoning can convert the illegal nature of such an act into a legal injunction. The non-believers worshipped the idols but Islam declared it illegal and equated it with disbelief. When Islam condemned their worship of idols as forbidden, they argued in favour of the sanity of their traditional practice. Instead of accepting their worship of idols as an illegal act as declared by Islam, they started looking for lame justifications, i.e. they did not worship the idols as the creator but they worshipped them to acquire

1. Qur'an (*az-Zumar*) 39:3.

nearness to Allah. They used the idols only as a form of intermediation and their target was only to come close to Allah.

The Qur'anic verse rejects this argument. Even if someone worships non-Allah as a means to come closer to Allah, it is treated by Islam as a kind of disbelief and a forbidden act and no argument can make it valid.

Now the question arises why did the non-believers rely on mediation to legalize their illegal acts? It is an established fact that the one, who is arguing, is arguing on the basis of the beliefs and convictions of his addressee. In his discussion he brings forward an argument which is not only acceptable to his opponent but is also a part of his belief. Relying on this argument, he tries to argue with him so that he may accept the legality of his act on the basis of his argument. On the contrary, if he knows that idol worship is a form of disbelief for the addressee and he has a similar attitude towards all forms of intermediation, in that case, the non-believer would never have relied on idolatry and intermediation as justifications for their idolatrous practice. Therefore, for the non-believers to argue for the legality of their illegal acts on the basis of intermediation is an ugly attempt to legalize the forbidden act of idol worship. They were well aware of the fact that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and the Companions regarded it as valid practice. If they had known that Islam treated intermediation as an invalid act, they would never have argued with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and the Companions on its basis to justify their idolatry. Thus the very fact of their reliance on intermediation for the vindication of their

idol worship clearly proves that intermediation is a legal act in Islam.

But Allah rejected their argument. Even though the form of intermediation practised by them was popular and valid, it could not transform disbelief into a legal act as all forms of disbelief are strictly forbidden. Thus even an argument based on the noble concept of intermediation cannot purify idolatry from the virus of disbelief. Thus disbelief is disbelief, and even if it takes a billion somersaults, and changes colours like a chameleon, it will remain disbelief. Allah refused to accept the argument in its favour. As the holy Qur'an states:

> *Surely Allah does not forgive that a partner be associated with Him but a smaller (sin whatever it is,) He forgives for whomsoever He pleases.*[1]

He forgives every sin except the sin of associating partners with Him. The commission of this kind of sin is an act, which is unacceptable and unpardonable under all circumstances. Thus the gist of the holy verse is that Allah rejects disbelief, no matter what robes it is dressed in or what language it is phrased in; He does not reject intermediation because it is an absolutely valid act in Islam.

1. Qur'an (*an-Nisā'*) 4:48.

First similitude

Suppose a son is giving shoe beating to his mother. The father catches hold of him and asks him why is he beating up his mother. The son says he would never have done it, as he knows it is an uncivilized act, but he has done it because she was hurling filthy abuses at him. His argument is based on the psychology of his father. He knows that his father is allergic to filthy abuses, and he thought that an argument based on filthy abuses would cool down his father's boiling anger and he would say to him, "Well, son, you have done the right thing. A person who pours out filthy abuses at others must be given such lesson." But, instead, he gave him a few slaps and said to him, "There is no doubt that hurling abuses is bad, but after all, she is your mother and you have no right to beat her." Thus his argument based on abuse was rejected. But the rejection of the argument does not imply that throwing abuses at others is a valid act. It does not justify the act of shoe beating. Similarly, the argument based on its defence is also discarded.

In the same way when the non-believers and infidels were asked, "Why do you worship the idols?" They replied, "We worship them as a form of intermediation, we do not regard them as the creator or as worthy of worship in themselves." But their argument that justified the worship of non-Allah as a form of intermediation was refuted. Thus their argument in favour of intermediation cannot justify their idol worship.

Second similitude

An impure object cannot be made pure by giving an argument based on a pure object, nor can a forbidden act be legalized by simply fabricating an argument for its justification. Suppose someone says that he drinks. When someone asks him why does he drink and he replies that he drinks to dilute his grief. He can be told that there are countless ways to relieve one's grief or the intensity of one's sorrow. Drinking, which is a forbidden act, is not the only way; for example, he may stroll in a garden, do some exercise, inhale the cool morning breeze, remember Allah, concentrate on prayer, in short, he has a wide range of valid choices on hand to find solace for his grief.

Now as far as the argument of finding relief for one's grief is concerned, it is quite valid but how can it validate the act of drinking? One finds it difficult to swallow the inference. The argument does not mellow the evil act of drinking, the argument based on relief cannot legalize it. Similarly, the argument of the non-believers was fallacious to justify their idolatry. Since idolatry is essentially an un-Islamic act, it could not be justified by any means, not even by an argument grounded in intermediation, which is otherwise an Islamic act.

As far as soliciting nearness to Allah is concerned, there are numerous valid means to achieve it. Idol worship is not a valid means. It is forbidden, as it is a form of disbelief. Therefore, only valid means must be employed to attain the nearness and pleasure of Allah. Idolatry is not a means of His nearness; it is rather the cause of His punishment.

Fourth objection: Prophets and saints were themselves in search of mediation

One objection that flows from their slick tongues as coffee from a press-button percolator is that those who are close to Allah, and on whom we tend to rely as intermediaries, are themselves in search of a means to gain close access to Allah. Since they themselves are looking for support, how can they be expected to support others? On the basis of this reasoning, they declare that reliance on the prophets and the saints as intermediaries is invalid. And to validate their invalid viewpoint they rely on the following Qur'anic verse by misrepresenting its essence:

> *Those, whom they worship (that is, the angels, jinn, 'Īsā (عليه السلام) and 'Uzayr (عليه السلام) etc., - they make their portraits and statues and worship them), they (themselves) seek nearness to their Lord, through those who among them are the nearest (to Allah's presence).*[1]

Proof for the justification of *tawassul* in the holy verse

This Qur'anic verse furnishes a strong argument in favour of intermediation. To infer from it that the prophets and the righteous are themselves in search of mediation to have access to Allah and, therefore, they cannot serve as means

1. Qur'an (*al-Isrā'*) 17:57.

of nearness to Him is invalid. The question arises if they themselves are pious and, therefore, near to Allah on account of their piety, then what other means are they seeking to possess what they already possess. The answer is provided by the Qur'an itself. *Ayyuhum aqrab* are the people who are nearer to Allah and the prophets and the righteous rely on them as intermediaries. This shows that intermediation is a graded process. There are those who are the nearest to Allah and there are those who are less near, while still there are others – who are on the periphery. Thus there are different grades of nearness and the process of drawing near to Allah is infinite. Those who are the closest to Him are trying to be still closer and those who are closer to these are trying to be closer to the ones who are the closest to Him. Thus, if intermediation is being practised by Him on intimates, how can it be declared invalid for the common man?

SECTION TWO

Tawassul through the prophets and the righteous
(In fact *tawassul* through virtuous deeds)

Objection

Those who are against intermediation through the prophets, the righteous and the saints, argue that it is their deeds that particularize them and, therefore, serve as a source of intermediation for them. How can an intermediatee whose own salvation depends on his good deeds serve as a means of redemption for another man? Therefore, only good deeds serve as the basis of intermediation, not the personalities of the righteous people.

Answer

I do not consider this stand as valid. We rely on the prophets, the righteous and the saints and offer them as a means of access to Allah on account of our limitless love and devotion for them. The choice of means is justified only by the presence of love. It is also an established fact that to love those who are near and dear to Allah is in itself

a virtuous act and this is obviously an argument which cannot be rebutted by any other argument, no matter how subtle or elaborate or tantalizing it may be.

1. Love of Allah's favourites as a form of mediation

The petitioner is acting for himself because he loves those whom Allah loves. He is in fact saying: 'O Lord, I love Your friend, the holy Prophet (ﷺ), and I love the orthodox Caliphs, the Companions, the Successors and their followers, the saints and the righteous. I offer this love to You as the source of intermediation so that You grant my prayer and fulfil my need.' It means love of Allah's favoured ones becomes a means of the prayer's acceptance. There is no doubt that love of Allah's favourites is not only the fulfilment of a divine command but is also a great virtuous deed. It is narrated by Abū Hurayrah:

> *Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: When Allah loves some person, He sends for Jibrīl and commands him: Verily, I love such and such person; you should also love him, so Jibrīl loves him as well. Then Jibrīl proclaims in the heavens that Allah loves such and such person; you should also love*

> *him. Then the residents of the heavens love him as well. Then his love is sent down to the earth (the world).*[1]

First of all, Allah elevated His Own obedient servant to the status of His beloved, then He commanded Jibrīl and all other angels that they should love His servant. The angels, following the divine command, also made him their beloved. In this all the heavenly creatures shared the divine love for His beloved servant. But the matter does not end here. Allah descended this love for His servant down on this earth and then created a niche for the love and popularity of His servant in every heart and every creature fell in love with him. It follows that to love those who are loved by Allah is a divine command. From this point of view this act of loving is in itself a virtuous act in which Allah is not only Himself involved but He has also involved His angels as well as the creatures of the earth. When this act is endorsed not only by the practice of the prophets but also a popular act performed by the creatures of the earth and the heavens, then what could be a better virtuous act in favour of the petitioner.

---

1. Muslim transmitted it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *birr was-silah wal-ādāb* (virtue, good manners and joining of the ties of relationship) ch.48 (4:2030#2637); Bakhārī narrated it at three places in his *as-Sahīh:* b. of *bad'-ul-khalq* (beginning of creation) ch.6 (3:1175#3037), b. of *adab* (good manners) ch.41 (5:2246#5693), and b. of *tawhīd* (Islamic monotheism) ch.33 (6:2721#7047); Ahmad bin Hambal in *Musnad* (2:413); Mālik bin Anas in *al-Muwattā*, b. of *sha'ar* (hair) ch.5 (2:953#15); and Muhammad Khatīb Tabrīzī in *Mishkāt-ul-masābīh*, b. of *ādāb* (good manners) ch.16 (3:74#5005).

2. Reciprocal nearness of lover and beloved on the Day of Judgement

True love is that virtuous act which draws the lover increasingly closer to the beloved. It is narrated by Anas bin Mālik:

> *A person called on the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and said to him: O Messenger of Allah, when is the Hour (the Day of Judgement)? The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) stood up for prayer. After performing the prayer he said: where is the person who had asked about the Hour? That person replied: O Messenger of Allah, I am here. He said: what preparation have you made for that (Hour)? He submitted: O Messenger of Allah, I have offered neither many prayers nor kept many fasts, but I know that much that I love Allah and His Messenger. On hearing this, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)*

> *commented that (on the Day of Judgement) a person will be with him whom he loves and you will be judged along with him. It is reported that, after accepting Islam, this made the Muslims happier than anything else had made them in the past.*[1]

This tradition proves that whereas prayer, fast, zakat and hajj are virtuous acts and their performance entitles a man to a set of rewards, similarly love is also an act of virtue, which results in nearness to his beloved. The words of the tradition themselves endorse love as a virtuous act. When the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) asked the petitioner: what preparation have you made for the Day of Judgement? He replied: 'O Messenger of Allah! My acts do not include big-ticket deeds like prayer and fast, but the act of loving Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) is one of my deeds.' The

---

1. Tirmidhī narrated it in *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *zuhd* (piety) ch.50 (4:595#2385), and graded it *sahīh* (sound); Ahmad bin Hambal in *Musnad* (3:104, 168, 178, 200); Ibn Hibbān, *as-Sahīh* (1:182, 308-9#8,105; 16:345#7348); Baghawī, *Sharh-us-sunnah* (13:60-4#3475-9). Bukhārī also narrated it with different words in his *as-Sahīh,* b. of *fadā'il-us-sahābah* (merits of the Companions) ch.6 (3:1349#3485), b. of *adab* (good manners) ch.95, 96 (5:2282-3#5815-9), and b. of *ahkām* (judgements) ch.10 (6:2615#6734); Muslim in *as-Sahīh*, b. of *birr was-silah wal-ādāb* (virtue, good manners and joining of the ties of relationship) ch.50 (4:2032-3#2639); Ahmad bin Hambal in *Musnad* (3:110,165,167,172,173,207,208,255,276); 'Abd-ur-Razzāq, *al-Musannaf* (11:199#20317); Humaydī, *Musnad* (2:502#1190); Ibn Abū Shaybah, *al-Musannaf* (15:169#19407); Abū Ya'lā, *Musnad* (5:144#2758; 6: 36,256#3280-1, 3557); Ibn Hibbān, *as-Sahīh* (2:323-4#563-5); Tabarānī, *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (3:183#3061); Bayhaqī, *Shu'ab-ul-īmān* (1:380,387#462,498; 2:130-1#1379); and Muhammad Khatīb Tabrīzī in *Mishkāt-ul-masābīh*, b. of *adab* (good manners) ch.16 (3:75#5009).

Prophet (ﷺ) replied that as each act has a reward, similarly the act of loving has also a reward. A person will be judged along with the man he loves and you will be judged on the Day of Judgement along with the man you love. It means that this man, simply on account of his love for the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), will be judged with him. He will be in the Prophet's company and this is a promise made by the Prophet (ﷺ) himself and this is Allah's promise as well. Besides, this promise is not restrictive; it has a general application; it applies to the Companions, the Successors, their followers, even the entire Muslim community.

Love of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) is an act, which not only earns the lover a number of blessings through the agency of his beloved on this earth but also brings him closer to his beloved in the next world. Since the word *hubb* (love) here is used in a generic sense, it equally applies to all forms and grades of love. Its litmus test is sincerity as insincere love is a travesty of true love and, therefore, not only repulsively hideous but also morally revolting. This comment is vindicated by the words of Anas bin Mālik that after accepting Islam, he had never found the Muslims happier than he found them on hearing this explanation.

This tradition conclusively proves that the love of Allah's favoured people serves as a source of intermediation for divine blessings. And when the servant prays to Allah, he, in fact, is saying: My Master, the love I have for Your beloved Prophet (ﷺ), and the love I have for the Companions, the Successors and the righteous on account of You, I offer this act of love as mediation to You

and request You to grant my such and such need for their sake. The servant's love for Allah's favoured ones is an act that enjoys Allah's blessings and this very act becomes a source of intermediation for the servant.

3. Love for Allah's lovers is the cause of divine love

The servant, following the divine commands, performs all kinds of worship: he offers prayer, keeps fast, performs hajj and pays zakat. In short, he fulfils all his obligations. These acts have a twofold significance. On the one hand, he is implementing the divine commands; on the other hand, he earns the reward for these acts. The range and scope of these rewards include a place in Paradise for him. But the highest and the most cherished prize is the pleasure of Allah. To secure this prize, he spends every moment of his life in doing things which please Allah. And he does not restrict his remembrance of Allah only to a specific schedule or timetable but it straddles his entire life. No matter where he is, or what he is doing, he never forgets the Lord. The focus of his love or enmity is Allah Alone. The following tradition is about such lovers of Allah:

It is narrated by Mu'ādh bin Jabal that he heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) saying:

> *Allah the Exalted and Almighty said: My love has been made obligatory for those two persons who love each other on My count and spend time together for My sake, and*

see each other for My sake and give money to each other generously for My sake.[1]

Allah states in this tradition: those of My servants who love one another on My count, and also love those who love one another for My sake, then My love for them becomes mandatory and obligatory. I own them as my beloveds. Their object is not any ulterior gain. They spend time together in search of My pleasure. They spend money because they want only to please Me and not to display their riches and they call on each other, not out of any personal or selfish motive, but only out of their love for Me. Such are the people who deserve My love and uncounted blessings. Now a petitioner loves the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), members of the Prophet's family, the Companions, the saints and the righteous people simply because the basis of his love is the love of Allah. By loving these people, he himself in return is loved by Allah. Thus all these forms are various links in the chain of love which is ultimately the love of Allah, and these expressions and acts of love eventually draw him closer to Allah and he acquires a favoured status. Thus the petitioner's act of love is regarded by Allah as a virtuous as well as a favourite act and it is graded higher than the other virtuous acts mainly because in this act the Lord Himself is one of the participants and it is uncertain whether the other acts will

1. This *sahīh* (sound) hadith narrated by Mālik bin Anas in *al-Muwattā*, b. of *sha'ar* (hair) ch.5 (2:954#16), and Ibn 'Abd-ul-Barr said its chain is good. Ahmad bin Hambal also transmitted it in his *Musnad* (5:233); Hākim in *al-Mustadrak* (4:169), who graded it *sahīh*, and also confirmed by Dhahabī; Baghawī in *Sharh-us-sunnah*, (13:49-50#3463); Muhammad Khatīb Tabrīzī in *Mishkāt-ul-masābīh*, b. of *ādāb* (good manners) ch.16 (3:75#5011).

find divine acceptance or not. But love of the saints and the favourites of Allah is an act which transforms the petitioner into Allah's beloved. In this way its acceptance is guaranteed.

4. Love for the sake of Allah results in higher grades

Love of the servants of Allah brings one not only nearer to Him but also helps him in securing higher grades.

It is narrated by 'Umar bin al-Khattāb that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> *Among Allah's servants there are some who are neither prophets nor martyrs but on the Day of Judgement the prophets and the martyrs will envy their grades. The Companions asked: O Messenger of Allah, tell us, who are those people? He replied: 'those are the people who love one another on Allah's count. They are neither related to*

*one another nor do they have any property to exchange. I swear on Allah that they will have faces of light, they will be on pulpits of light. They will not have any fear when others will be afraid, they will not have any grief when others will be aggrieved.' Then he recited the verse: Beware! No doubt, there is no fear for the friends of Allah nor shall they be sad and sorrowful. [Qur'an (*Yūnus*) 10:62].*[1]

On the Day of Judgement when people will be scrambling selfishly for personal safety and survival, everybody will be overawed by the overwhelming presence of Allah, there will be a few people untouched by this pushing, shoving and jostling. They will be content and an unbelievable serenity will be visible on their faces. Everyone will envy their unruffled calmness; even the prophets and the saints will be deeply impressed by the halo of tranquillity hovering around their faces. Their highly-graded position will be a feast for every eye. The Companions asked in amazement: O Messenger of Allah, who are these people? The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) replied: these are the people who love one another and the basis of their mutual love is neither blood relationship nor abundance of wealth, they love one another only for the sake of Allah. Thus the basis of their love is in fact their shared love of Allah. Their rewards and grades derive

1. Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, b. of *ijārah* (wages) 3:288 (#3527); Bayhaqī, *Shu'ab-ul-īmān*, (6:486#8998,8999); Muhammad Khatīb Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt-ul-masābīh*, b. of *adab* (good manners) ch.16 (3:75-6#5012).

directly from this source. On this day their faces will emit rays of light and they will be seated on pulpits of light.

The tradition has clearly established the fact that people who love one another simply because they love Allah deserve high rewards and grades on the Day of Judgement and they will receive these precious gifts through the mediation of Allah's favourites because their love of these intimate friends is based fundamentally on their love of Allah from which basic source it draws its strength and influence.

5. Love of Allah's friends is the cause of Allah's love

Love of holy men and saints is an act which earns the servant not only the love of Allah but also draws him closer to Him.

It is reported by Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

> *If two persons love each other on Allah's count, and if one of them is in the east and the other in the west, Allah will bring them together on the Day of Resurrection and He*

will say: This is the man you loved on my count.[1]

It is now established that intermediation through the prophets, the holy persons and the saints is quite valid whether it is by invoking their name in prayer, or by physical presence in their companionship or through expressions of love for them. This act of intermediation is correct and legally permissible. A detailed discussion on this issue will be found in the sixth chapter. For the time being, in the light of Qur'anic injunctions and relevant traditions, it should be kept in mind that intermediation through the servants of Allah, who are His favourites and who are the righteous, is quite valid and is compatible with Islamic teachings. The doubts and objections expressed against this form of intermediation are baseless and grounded in prejudice. People who oppose intermediation through Allah's favourites and holy men need to revamp the very basis of their faith. I have made it clear that we rely on holy persons as sources of intermediation on account of our love for them and loving a holy person is in itself a virtuous act. Therefore, intermediation through these holy men is in fact intermediation through virtuous deeds and this kind of intermediation based on righteous deeds is universally permissible in Islam.

1. Bayhaqī, *Shu'ab-ul-īmān*, (6:492#9022); Muhammad Khatīb Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt-ul-masābīh*, b. of *ādāb* (good manners) ch.16 (3:77#5024); 'Alā'-ud-Dīn 'Alī, *Kanz-ul-'ummāl* (9:4#24646).

CHAPTER FOUR

The Doctrine of *Tawassul*

(In the Light of Sacred Traditions)

Purging disbelief in Muhammad's followers

Allah has conferred infinite blessings on the followers of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). One of these blessings is their impossibility to return to disbelief after embracing Islam. It happened in the past that the followers of a particular prophet returned to their earlier state of ignorance and disbelief after his death. But this shall not happen to the followers of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). The Prophet of Allah (ﷺ) in the last days of his earthly sojourn had himself declared that he had no fears that his followers will relapse into disbelief after his death. As Muslims, we should reflect on his words. The Prophet (ﷺ) who was sent to this world to quash disbelief and all forms of impermissible innovation, who is our primary source of guidance and who is our ultimate means of salvation, is saying that he has no doubts lurking in his mind about their steady and irreversible belief, while we are hurling allegations of disbelief at one another to cater to our false sense of superiority or to pamper our egotism based on prejudice and sheer stubbornness. What could be more unfortunate than this mutual incrimination?

It is narrated in a tradition:

> *'Uqbah bin 'Āmir has narrated: The Prophet (ﷺ) one day went to (Uhud) and offered prayer for the natives (martyrs) of Uhud as it is (generally) offered for the dead. Then he returned to the pulpit and said: I am your forerunner and I am a witness on you. By Allah! I am right now seeing the basin of my fountain (*kawthar*), and I have been handed over the keys of the treasures of the earth (or the keys of the earth). I swear on Allah, I have no fears that after me you will return to disbelief but I am apprehensive that you will try to outdo each other in acquiring worldly goods.*[1]

This is a statement made by the Prophet (ﷺ) himself. He has sworn on Allah about his followers that they will not revert to disbelief. The Prophet's words call for deep reflection and serious soul-searching. We brush aside the

---

1. Bukhārī narrated this tradition in his *as-Sahīh* with different words at six various places, i.e. b. of *janā'iz* (funerals) ch.71 (1:451#1279); b. of *manāqib* (virtues) ch.22 (3:1317#3401); b. of *maghāzī* (the military expeditions led by the Prophet) ch.14, 25 (4:1486, 1498-9 #3816, 3857); b. of *riqāq* (softening of hearts) ch.7, 53 (5:2361, 2408#6062, 6218); Tabarānī, *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (17:278-80#767-70); Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (4:14); Baghawī, *Sharh-us-sunnah* (14:39-41#3822-3); 'Alā'-ud-Dīn 'Alī, *Kanz-ul-'ummāl* (14:416#39122).

Prophet's statement when we accuse one another of disbelief. This tradition has been reproduced by Imam Muslim[1] and Imam Ahmad bin Hambal[2]. Repeated references to this tradition by people of such calibre and prestige, and our dogged defiance of its contents are nothing but harrowing unawareness of the real spirit of our faith.

Intermediation, which has been established as a valid act in Islam by countless Qur'ānic injunctions and authentic and certified traditions and which has been practised by the large majority of Muslims, is now turned into a matter of dispute and controversy, and is now being used as a convenient ploy to not only indulge in incriminating one another in disbelief but also to give vent to our personal frustrations. If we care to reflect on his words and statements, we will come to realize that to insist on the illegality of intermediation, either as a doctrine or in some of its actual applications, especially when its legality has been conclusively established both by the Qur'ān and the hadith, is nothing but religious perversity. Tens of statements made by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) are witness to the fact that to rely on valid forms of intermediation in order to come closer to Allah is quite consistent with Qur'ānic commands and the Prophet's statements.

As it is reported by 'Amr bin Shu'ayb that his grandfather says: we were present in the company of the holy Prophet (ﷺ) when messengers from Hawāzin tribe came and said: O Muhammad! We belong to the same origin and tribe, and the trouble we are facing is not hidden

---

1. Narrated in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *fadā'il* (virtues) ch.9 (4:1795#2296).
2. Narrated in his *Musnad* (4:149, 153-4).

from you, therefore, have mercy on us. The holy Prophet (ﷺ) replied: opt one of the two choices; either take away your property and wealth or have your women freed. They opted for their women and children. Then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) added: as far as my share and the share of 'Abd-ul-Muttalib and his children (in the spoils) is concerned, I have already given it to you. But when I have performed the noon prayer, you should all stand up and say:

> *Through the means of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) we seek help for our women and children from believers (or Muslims).*[1]

The narrator says that when people had finished their prayer, they repeated the same words as the Prophet (ﷺ) had advised them. Now these words were uttered by the sacred tongue of the holy Prophet (ﷺ) himself and he uttered them in the form of a command. Therefore, this tradition furnishes a cogent justification for the act of intermediation.

In the following pages I will draw upon some of the statements made by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), which clearly prove that intermediation is neither a form of disbelief nor a forbidden act. On the contrary, it is quite valid and one of the permissible ways to seek the nearness of Allah.

1. Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, b. of *hibah* (gifts) 6:262-3.

Section One

Intermediation through good deeds

Good deeds are called virtues. To pray through the means of these deeds, "O Allah, through my particular act which I performed purely for Your pleasure, I beseech You that my need be fulfilled," is quite valid. A few statements that support the act of intermediation are given below:

1. Deliverance from trouble through mediation

A tradition recorded in *as-Sahīhayn*[1] furnishes clear evidence of the use of intermediation through virtuous deeds which delivers individuals from tension and anxiety or from an actual calamity. 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar cites the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) to have said:

Once upon a time three travellers were passing through a jungle. All of a sudden the sky was overcast with jet-black clouds. They were thinking of seeking shelter that it began to rain in buckets. They had no other choice but to

1. *as-Sahīh* of Imam Bukhārī and *as-Sahīh* of Imam Muslim.

take shelter in a cave. So they scraped into the cave. The entrance of the cave was quite small. Suddenly a heavy stone came sliding down and covered the entrance. They were trapped inside the cave. They could not move the stone even with their collective might. Therefore, they lost all hope of survival. They felt that the cave would prove to be their grave.

The three of them were religious persons and had an optimistic outlook on life. They had complete faith in the glory and grandeur of God, so the spell of hopelessness did not last long. They chuckled to themselves as they thought of a plan. The clouds of frustration rolled away. Since the plan derived from their strong religious conviction, they readily decided to implement it. They said to one another: there is only one-way to escape the present crunch. We should offer to Allah as a form of intermediation the acts we have performed for His exclusive pleasure and implore Him through their blessings. They said:

> *Remember the deeds you performed purely for (the pleasure of) Allah, then pray through them to Allah. He may open it (and deliver you from this calamity).*

Since the plan was sound and suited the occasion, they all expressed willingness to put it into action. Each one of them offered his virtuous acts turn by turn and using it as a form of mediation, prayed to Allah to deliver them from their misery.

The virtuous act of the first man—Service of parents

One of them related his virtuous act in this way: O Lord, my parents were very old and weak. I considered it my duty to serve them sincerely. I worked hard the whole day. When I returned home, first of all I milked the cow and served the milk to my mother and father. Then I attended to my wife and children and other people. This was my daily routine. One day I was delayed and arrived home late. My mother and father had waited themselves to sleep. However, I milked the cow, poured the milk into a cup and stood by their bedside. I did not like to disturb them in their sleep as I respected them too much; at the same time I could not bear to feed my children before feeding them (my parents) first. Thus I stood there, holding the cup in my hand that I will make them drink it as soon as they woke up. My wee little children kept crying and sobbing bitterly but I ignored it and did not like to break my principle, and in this very state of tension, the night lapsed into day.

> *(O Allah,) You know it. If I had done this deed purely for Your pleasure, then remove the stone from the entrance so that we can see the sky.*

As soon as he ended his prayer, the stone slid a little on one side and the sky appeared, but the gap was not wide enough to let a man pass through.

The virtuous act of the second man—Self-purity

The second person narrates his act in these words: I was emotionally attached with my first cousin but that pure and innocent girl was completely unaware of my feelings. She snubbed me once when I tried to convey to her my emotional plight and after that I never dared do so.

Then once there was a severe drought. The shadows of poverty and hunger began to hover around her. Driven by starvation, that innocent girl came over to me and sought my help. I decided to take undue advantage of her helplessness; I seduced her as she was in a vulnerable condition. I piled up a big sum of 100 dinars in front of her and she half-willingly agreed to cater to my emotions. When I tried to give it a practical shape, tears welled up in her eyes. She became restless with shock and said: don't be cruel and don't take undue advantage of my helplessness. Fear Allah and don't make this immoral move. On hearing her words, my hair stood on their ends and, on account of fear of the Lord, the organs of my body began to tremble. My evil intentions were buried and the human being sleeping inside me became awake. I left her there and did not pick up the money either.

> *O Allah, if, in Your knowledge, I did so only to seek Your pleasure and if You like my act, then You should open our way (so that we can look at the world outside).*

As he ended the prayer, the stone slid a little farther but the gap was still not wide enough for them to come out.

The virtuous act of the third man—To return to the deserving what belongs to him

The third man offers his good deed as his mediation in this way: O Lord, once I had employed a few labourers. I paid their wages as soon as they completed their work. But one of the labourers, for no apparent reason, did not take his wages and went away. His wage was a measure of rice. I planted the rice and when the paddy was blooming, I sold it and bought a goat with the money I made out of the bargain. Through Your blessing, more goats were born out of her. Then I bought a cow and through Your blessing the number of cows multiplied. Thus with the help of a labourer's wages, there were so many cattle that the valley was filled with them and I had to keep a shepherd to look after those animals. One day the same labourer returned and said to me:

"Fear Allah, don't be cruel and pay me my wages." Then I said (to him), "Go and take those cows and their shepherd."

He said, "Fear Allah and do not ridicule me." I told him everything with a grim face and he went away with all the goods.

(O Lord,) if I did all this for Your pleasure alone, then, through its blessing, deliver us from this trouble and remove the

> *remaining part (of the stone from the entrance of the cave so that we could come out of it).*

As soon as their prayer ended, Allah granted it unhesitatingly, and their virtuous acts changed their dark night of disappointment into a bright day of hope. Through them, they received a new lease of life. Since the basis of their good deeds was the pleasure of Allah, He granted their prayer and the stone at the entrance of the cave skidded aside and all three of them slipped out of it easily and comfortably and went on their way.[1]

2. Prayer as mediation

Five-time prayer is mandatory for every Muslim. It is a pious act through which the servant practically demonstrates his servitude to Allah in a state of prostration. Since Allah likes humility in his servants, prayer is a form of worship, which represents the climax of humility. That is why Allah loves the act of prayer very much. Allah condones the lapses of His servants through the means and blessing of prayer.

It is narrated by Abū Hurayrah that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said:

---

1. Bukhārī narrated it with different words at various places in his *as-Sahīh:* b. of *buyū‘* (sales) ch.98 (2:771#2102); b. of *ijārah* (hiring) ch.12 (2:793-4#2152); b. of *muzāra‘ah* (sharecropping) ch.11 (2:821-2#2208); b. of *ambiyā’* (prophets) ch.52 (3:1278#3278); b. of *adab* (good manner) ch.5 (5:2228-9#5629); and Muslim in *as-Sahīh*, b. of *dhikr wad-du‘ā’ wat-tawbah wal-istighfār* (remembering (Allah), invocation, repentance and seeking forgiveness) ch.27 (4:2099-2100#2743).

> *Tell me if someone among you has a canal at his doorstep, and he has a bath in it five times a day, will any speck of dirt remain on his body? The audience replied: No dirt will remain on his body. He said: The same applies to five prayers. God erases sins through their (blessings and means).*[1]

Here five prayers are acting as a form of mediation. Through them, man achieves his salvation:

3. Nearness of Allah through voluntary prayer

The purpose of a true believer is to seek access to the nearness and pleasure of his real Lord and Master, and the servant gains the nearness as well as the pleasure of his Lord through optional prayers (*nawāfil*). It means the servant attains the nearness of the Lord through the mediation of optional cycles of prayer.

It is attributed to Abū Hurayrah that Allah says in a divine hadith:

---

1. Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *masājid wa mawādi'-us-salāt* (mosques and the places of prayer) ch.51 (1:462-3#667); Bukhārī, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *mawāqīt-us-salāt* (the times of the prayers) ch.5 (1:197#505); Tirmidhī in *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *amthāl* (examples) ch.5 (5:151#2868) and graded it *hasan sahīh*; Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, b. of *salāt* (prayer), 1:231; Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (2:379); and Dārimī in *Sunan*, b. of *salāt* (prayer) ch.1 (1:213#1187).

> *And My servant keeps coming closer to Me through his voluntary acts of prayer until I love him. So when I love him: I become his sense of hearing with which he hears and I become his sense of sight with which he sees and I become his hand with which he holds and I become his leg with which he walks.*[1]

4. Deliverance from the hellfire through better upbringing of daughters

During the era of ignorance, people generally disfavoured their daughters. At the birth of a daughter, they felt extremely worried. The Qur'ān has very clearly depicted their typical attitude: whenever someone is given the glad tidings of the birth of a daughter, his face becomes black with anger.[2] This is how the non-believers expressed their disapproval on the birth of their daughters. But Islam placed the fair sex on such a pedestal as is simply inconceivable in any other social system. Mother, sister, daughter and wife, all are sacred relations. Islam not only sanctified these bonds but also spelled out an unmistakable reward for all those who practically realize the value and

1. Bukhārī, *as-Sahīh*. b. of *riqāq* (softening of hearts) ch.38 (5:2385#6137).
2. Qur'ān (*an-Nahl*) 16:58.

sanctity of these relations, that is, who protect them and bring them up decently. We realize from a number of statements made by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), that proper upbringing and education of the daughters is such a virtuous act that it serves as a form of mediation for the parents and delivers them from the fire of Hell. It is narrated by 'Ā'ishah:

> *A woman came to see me (and) she had two daughters with her. She had come to beg something from me but she found nothing with me except a date. I gave the same to her. She divided the date between her two daughters. Then she stood up and left. (After this,) the Holy Prophet came over. I related to him the whole story. Then he said: Whoso was tested through the daughters and he treated them well, then this will turn for him into a veil against Hell.*[1]

1. Bukhārī narrated it in *as-Sahīh*, b. of *adab* (good manner) ch.18 (5:2234#5649); and Muslim in *as-Sahīh*, b. of *birr was-silah wal-ādāb* (virtue, good manners and joining of the ties of relationship) ch.46 (4:2027#2629).

5. Deliverance from punishment through the mediation of the penitent

To worship Allah, to love one another for the sake of Allah, and remember Him while others are sleeping, are such virtuous acts, which are highly favoured by Allah. Those who are penitent and ask for His forgiveness in the silence of the nights are His favourites and through the blessing of their mediation, He delivers other creatures from punishment though otherwise they might have ended up in Hell.

It is attributed to Anas bin Mālik that once the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> *Verily, Allah the Glorious says, "Surely I want to punish the residents of the earth but when I look at the people who populate My places of worship, who love one another for My sake and who ask for forgiveness in the later part of the night, then I turn (My wrath) away from them.*[1]

---

1. Bayhaqī, *Shu'ab-ul-īmān*, 6:500 (#9051); Suyūtī, *ad-Durr-ul-manthūr* (3:216).

SECTION TWO

Mediation in supplication

1. Intermediation through Allah's names and attributes

Just as the acts of a petitioner serve as a form of mediation for the redress of his ills and problems, similarly a reference to Allah's various names becomes a means for the acceptance of his supplication. The theme of the initial verses of surah *al-Fātihah,* for instance, is focused on the praise and glorification of the Lord:

> *All praise is for Allah Who is the Lord of all the worlds, (and) is infinitely Kind and Merciful, (and) is the Master of the Day of Judgement.*[1]

After enumerating the praises of Allah, the petitioner places before Him his request:

1. Qur'ān (*al-Fātihah*) 1:1-3.

(O Allah,) we worship only You and we seek only Your help.[1]

This is the relationship of service, the bond of servitude. The servant affirms not only his own low status, but also the highest status of Allah Who is Unique and Unrivalled, and in his prayer based on humility and self-negation, he seeks His help.

Here the question arises why worship has been given precedence over help? An act of worship can be performed only with Allah's blessing. Without His help, it remains unrealised. Therefore, the order of priority should have been reversed. First of all, Allah's help should have been sought and then with His help the servant should have engaged himself in worship, so the request for help should have preceded the request for worship. But Allah's commands have logic of their own and this is inherently built in the divine statements. Sometimes they appear to defy human expectation, which is invariably superficial and scratches only surfaces. But the divine logic is deep, and in order to realize its depth, one has to shed this casual sense of expectation. This is in fact the privilege of those human beings who are deeply impressed by divine logic and who staunchly believe that all divine utterances are logically justified as they appeal to our deeper sense of wisdom. Thus the answer to this question has been furnished by Imam Baydāwī while interpreting the verse. He says that the act of worship precedes the act of help to facilitate the acceptance of prayer. This also shows Allah's concern for

1. Qur'ān (*al-Fātihah*) 1:4.

His creatures; it is, in addition, the expression of His pervasive and extensive sympathy for His servants that He Himself is showing them the light to make their prayers effective:

> *And worship has been given precedence over the request for help so that a sense of compatibility is created between the last letters of the verses. Besides, it also suggests that the means (of worship) is given precedence over the request (for help) so that it may be granted.*[1]

Then the prayer is followed by another request:

> *Show us the right path.*[2]

The servant, through his mediation as a servant of Allah, implores Him for guidance. Thus a reference to Allah's names, to the words that describe his own status as His servant, and to his request for guidance, serve as a source of intermediation for the acceptance of his prayer. The servant, by referring to the names of Allah and by lowering his own status to the trough of the wave and confessing his own faults and weakness, prays to Allah and

---

1. Baydāwī, *Tafsīr* (1:14).
2. Qur'ān (*al-Fātihah*) 1:5.

this prayer acts as a form of mediation for the immediate fulfilment of his need or the elimination of his problem.

2. Prayer through the mediation of Allah's Personal names

Sometimes we use the personal names of Allah as a kind of mediation to process our petition and to ensure its effectiveness. This form of intermediation has been validated by the Prophet's own practice and it is supported, inter alia, by a tradition reported by Ibn Mājah. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> *O my Lord: I beg from You through the means of Your being Allah.*[1]

3. Prayer through the mediation of divine acts and attributes

Sometimes an act or attribute of Allah is invoked in the prayer as a form of mediation, as it is endorsed by a tradition of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). This prayer is attributed to him:

1. This *sahīh* hadith was narrated by Ibn Mājah in his *Sunan*, b. of *du'ā'* (supplication) ch.9 (2:1267#3857); Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, b. of *salāt* (prayer) 2:79 (#1493); Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *da'awāt* (supplications) ch.64 (5:515#3475); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (5:349, 360); and Baghawī in *Sharh-us-sunnah* (5:37-8#1259-60).

O Allah! I seek refuge in Your pleasure against Your wrath, and in Your exemption against Your punishment.[1]

These traditions clearly establish the fact that it is quite valid to beg Allah's protection and help for the fulfilment of one's needs through the mediation of His Acts and Attributes.

4. Intermediation through the Prophet's high station

The prayer for the Prophet's appointment to his high station and to use it as mediation earns one not only Allah's blessings but also guarantees the Prophet's intercession for him on the Day of Judgement. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said:

When you hear a mu'adhdhin *calling out for prayer, you should also say what he*

1. This *sahīh* hadith was transmitted by Ibn Mājah through 'Ā'ishah in his *Sunan*, b. of *du'ā'* (supplication) ch.3 (2:1263#3841); Muslim in *as-Sahīh*, b. of *salāt* (prayer) ch.42 (1:352#486); Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, b. of *salāt*, 1:232 (#879); Mālik bin Anas, *al-Muwattā*, b. of *Qur'ān*, ch.8 (1:214#31); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (6:201); Ibn Hibbān, *as-Sahīh*, (5:258#1932); and Ibn Khuzaymah in *as-Sahīh* (1:329#655).

> *says, then send blessings on me. Surely, whoso sends blessings on me (once), Allah sends His mercy on him ten times. Then ask Allah for the* wasīlah *to be granted to me. It is a position in Paradise which is reserved for His special servant and I'm hopeful that I'm that special servant. So anyone who asks (Allah) the* wasīlah *for me, my intercession for him will be obligatory (on the Day of Judgement).*[1]

If someone sends salutations on the holy Prophet (ﷺ) once, he is rewarded with Allah's mercy ten times. And similarly if someone prays to Allah for appointing the Prophet (ﷺ) to the promised high station in Paradise, that person is entitled to his intercession on the Day of Judgement.

5. Sending blessings on the Prophet (ﷺ) as mediation for the acceptance of prayer

Sending blessings on the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is highly

---

1. Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *salāt* (prayer) ch.7 (1:288-9#384); Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, b. of *salāt* (1:144#523); Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *manāqib* (virtues and merits) ch.1 (5:586-7#3614); Nasā'ī in *Sunan*, b. of *adhān* (the call to prayer) 2:25-6, and *'Amal-ul-yawm wal-laylah*, p.158 (#45); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (2:168); Baghawī, *Sharh-us-sunnah*, 2:284-5 (#421); Ibn Khuzaymah, *as-Sahīh*, 1:219 (#418); Abū 'Awānah, *Musnad* (1:336); Ibn Hibbān, *as-Sahīh* (4:588-90#1690-2); Ibn-us-Sunnī, *'Amal-ul-yawm wal-laylah*, p.33 (#91); Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (1:409-10); Muhammad Khatīb Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt-ul-masābīh*, b. of *salāt*, ch.5 (1:215#657); and 'Alā'-ud-Dīn 'Alī, *Kanz-ul-'ummāl* (7:700#20998).

cherished by Allah. The popularity and propriety of this act can be gauged from the fact that even if the person who is performing it happens to be a confirmed liar and a dyed-in-the-wool sinner, his act is not rejected. When he sends salutations on the Prophet (ﷺ), it is not only appreciated by Allah but is also given proper recognition.

One may ask what is the justification for accepting salutations on the Prophet (ﷺ) from a person who is generally known as a blackguard and a sinner. The answer is that this act carries a variety of meanings, some of which are given below.

For example, to send mercy, to confer nearness on someone, to mention someone at a highly audible pitch of voice and to give blessing. Now if we reflect on these meanings, we come to realize that none of these blessings were denied to the Prophet (ﷺ); he already possessed all of them. Allah's blessings are being showered on him all the time and it is a continuous act. These blessings were showered on him at the beginning of time and will continue to visit him till the end of time, and there is no possibility whatsoever of the termination of this process. As far as nearness is concerned, the night of ascension is the most authentic witness to this phenomenon when all the distances between Allah and His beloved evaporated into thin air:

So when the distance between them was
of two bow-lengths or even less than that.[1]

When this is the state of union during a single night, who could compute the grades of nearness which are being conferred on him without break or interruption. The height and glory of his stature is also unmatched. So the Prophet (ﷺ) already embodies the entire spectrum of meanings associated with sending blessings on him. Therefore, when man sends his blessings on the Prophet (ﷺ), he is in fact saying: O Allah, send blessings on Your beloved. Allah says: O my servant, I am already sending blessings on him, conferring My mercy on him, glorifying him and drawing continuously closer to him. You need not stress it, it is already in process. Since you have not asked anything for yourself, you have not prayed for wealth and children, you have not prayed for recuperation from illness, and there is no personal motive behind your prayer but you have only expressed blessings for My beloved and implored Me to send these blessings on him, so I grant your prayer.

Since the process is going on even before the prayer, therefore, even if the person who is sending blessings on him happens to be a sinner, his prayer is accepted. This is the reason that this act is absolutely acceptable and, therefore, totally immune to any form of rejection or disinclination.

1. Qur'ān (*an-Najm*) 53:9.

How to turn presumptuous worship into absolutely acceptable worship

All forms of worship are tentatively acceptable as they are based on the presumption that they will be accepted by Allah. Since an act of worship involves rigorous preparation and conformity to a set of conditions and prerequisites for which he has to spare time and sacrifice his personal comforts, therefore, it is his natural wish that his worship should be accepted and his labour should not go waste but Allah has His own way. It is stated:

> *To Him ascend pure words and He exalts righteous deed.*[1]

Therefore, driven by his physical nature, man explores excuses and pretexts which may elevate his deeds to the level of divine acceptability and they may be acknowledged by Allah in spite of his weakness, flaws and lapses. Divine mercy has not left his natural desire in the lurch but, as an expression of His infinite mercy, He Himself has shown him the way that can transform his tentative acts of worship into an absolutely acceptable reality. And the way is that at the start and conclusion of each act, he should send blessings on the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Since this act is absolutely acceptable, therefore, whenever it is submitted to Allah, it will surely be acknowledged by Him, and it is beyond divine mercy that it should accept his blessings on the Prophet (ﷺ) and reject his acts that lie between the two salutations. Therefore, the most effective way to make

---

1. Qur'ān (*Fātir*) 35:10.

one's acts absolutely acceptable is to start and conclude them by sending blessings on the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

Sending blessings on the holy Prophet (ﷺ) as the last act in the universe

Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur'ān:

> *All that is on earth will pass away, and there will abide forever the Person of Your Lord, Master of glory and honour.*[1]

> *Every soul shall taste of death.*[2]

When everything is reduced to extinction, only the Person of the Lord shall remain and there will be no one to praise and glorify Him, but the act of sending blessings on the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) will continue uninterruptedly as it is endorsed by Allah Himself:

> *Surely Allah and His angels invoke blessings on the Holy Prophet (and they will continue to do so).*[3]

Each living being has to die. Each creature in this universe has to taste death. Allah Alone is eternally Existent. Since invoking blessings on the Holy Prophet

---

1. Qur'ān (*ar-Rahmān*) 55:26-7.
2. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-'Imrān*) 3:185.
3. Qur'ān (*al-Ahzāb*) 33:56.

(ﷺ) is also a divine act, and since Allah is immune to extinction, His Act also is eternally surviving. That is why the word *yusallūna* has been used by the Qur'ān which includes both the present and the future and, therefore, is translated as "eternal". The present never ends and each existing moment is the present and each moment that is to come is the future. Thus Allah's invocation of blessings on the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is a continuous act and will continue forever. It has never been interrupted in the past nor will it be interrupted in the future. Therefore, it is conclusively established by the Qur'ān that sending blessings on the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is the last act in the universe and only this act has permanence on account of its divine orientation. And when we adopt it as a form of intermediation, our prayer will surely be granted.

6. The Prophet's supplication through the mediation of his own person and other prophets

According to an authentic tradition the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) himself prayed through the mediation of other prophets as well as of his own person. Following are the words of the tradition:

It is narrated by Anas bin Mālik. He said: When the mother of 'Alī bin Abū Tālib — Fātimah bint Asad bin Hāshim — died, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) called on her and sat down by the head of the bed and said, "O dear mother, may Allah have mercy on you. After my mother, you were the one I regarded as my mother. When I was hungry you fed me to the point of saturation while you yourself remained hungry. Then you helped me put on clothes and instead of eating yourself, you gave me nice things to

eat. You did all this for Allah's pleasure and for a good reward in the Hereafter." Then he (the Prophet) commanded to bathe her three times. When camphor water was brought, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) poured some water into his hands. Then Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) took off his shirt and clothed her with it and used his own sheet of cloth as her coffin. Then Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) sent for Usāmah bin Zayd, Abū Ayyūb al-Ansārī and 'Umar bin al-Khattāb and the negro slave to dig up the grave. So they dug her grave. When they reached near the lahd, *Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) dug it up and drew the soil out with his own hands. When he finished, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) entered and lay down in (the grave), and said, "It is Allah Who controls life and death, and He is Ever living and will never die. (O Allah,) forgive my mother—Fātimah bint Asad—and help her answer properly at the time of questioning and through the mediation of Your Prophet (Muhammad) and the former prophets, make her grave capacious. Surely You are infinitely Merciful." Then he repeated, "God is Great" four times (i.e. led the funeral prayer). Then he, 'Abbās and Abū Bakr as-Siddīq lowered her into the grave.*[1]

---

1. Tabarānī related it in *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (24:351-2#871) and *al-Mu'jam-ul-awsat* (1:152-3#191) and its men are those of sound

7. Intermediation through the supplicant

Abū Sa'īd Khudrī has narrated:

> *The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: A person who comes out of his house with the intention of prayer and prays, "O Allah, I beseech You through the mediation of those who always crave Your (mercy) and I beg You through the mediation of my these steps (moving towards prayer). Surely I am heading neither towards any evil, nor out of pride or arrogance, nor out of a sense of self-display, nor for the sake of any world reputation. I have come out of my house to escape Your displeasure and to earn Your*

---

hadith except Rawh bin Salāh who is *da'īf* (weak), while Ibn Hibbān and Hākim declared him *thiqah* (trustworthy). Haythamī also cites it in *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (9:256-7); Ibn-ul-Jawzī in *al-'Ilal-ul-mutanāhiyyah* (1:268-9#433); Abū Nu'aym in *Hilyat-ul-awliyā' wa tabaqāt-ul-asfiyā'* (3:121); and Mahmūd Sa'īd Mamdūh graded it *hasan* (fair) in his *Raf'-ul-minārah* (pp.147-8).

> *pleasure. So I beg You to save me from the fire of Hell and forgive my sins. Surely, You are the Only One Who forgives sins." Then Allah turns towards him and seventy thousand angels ask for his forgiveness.*[1]

The chain of the tradition is consistent with the requirements of *hasan* hadith (fair tradition), and five different *huffāz*[2] of hadith graded it *hasan*. They are:

1. *Hāfiz* Dimyātī in *al-Mutajarr-ur-rābih fī thawāb al-'amal-is-sālih*.
2. *Hāfiz* Mundhirī in *at-Targhīb wat-tarhīb*.
3. *Hāfiz* Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī in *'Amāl-ul-adhkār*.
4. *Hāfiz* 'Irāqī in the *Takhrīj ahādīth al-Ihyā'*.
5. *Hāfiz* Būsīrī in *Misbāh-uz-zujājah*.

Ibn Khuzaymah graded it *sahīh* (sound) in his *as-Sahīh* through Fudayl bin Marzūq.[3]

8. Intermediation through the weak

In addition to the righteous, intermediation through the travellers, the sick and those on whom Allah has shown His mercy or about whom He has said that He is with them,

---

1. Ibn Mājah related it in his *Sunan*, b. of *masājid wal-jamā'āt* (mosques and congregations) ch.14 (1:256#778); Ahmad bin Hambal in *Musnad* (3:21); Ibn Abū Shaybah in *al-Musannaf* (10:211-2#9251); Mundhirī in *at-Targhīb wat-tarhīb* (2:458); Dimyātī in *al-Mutajarr-ur-rabih fī thawāb al-'amal-is-sālih* (pp.641-2#1321); Ibn-us-Sunnī in *'Amal-ul-yawm wal-laylah* (p.30 #83); and Dhahabī in *Mīzān-ul-i'tidāl* (2:447#4384).
2. Plural of *hāfiz*.
3. Mahmūd Sa'īd Mamdūh, *Raf'-ul-minārah* (pp.171-2).

that He helps them and He blesses them with His mercy, is quite consistent with the various statements made by the Prophet (ﷺ) himself.

Abū Sa'īd Khudrī relates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

Surely, only because of the supplication of the weak and their prayer and their sincerity, Allah helps this nation (Ummah).[1]

Abū ad-Dardā' has related that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

Look for me among the weak. Surely, it is on account of the weak that you are blessed with (Allah's) bounty and helped.[2]

It means that, through the mediation of the weak and the poor, Allah not only blesses a Muslim nation with His help and assistance, but also with resources and wealth. Therefore, any prayer mediated through them is also graced with acceptance by Allah.

9. Intermediation through the supplication of the prophets

Sa'd bin Abī Waqās relates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

1. Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, b. of jihad (holy war), 6:45; Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (6:331); Abū Nu'aym, *Hilyat-ul-awliyā' wa tabaqāt-ul-asfiyā'* (5:26).
2. Nasā'ī narrated it in *Sunan*, b. of jihad (holy war), 6:46; and Bayhaqī in *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (6:331).

> *Dhun-Nūn (the Man in Fish, i.e. the prophet Yūnus) prayed in the belly of the fish, "(O Allah,) there is no deity except You. Glory be to You! Surely I was from those who wronged (their souls)." So any Muslim person who uses these words in his prayer for a (fair) purpose, finds a favourable response from Allah.*[1]

A prophet is far more deeply and sensitively aware of the subtleties and nuances involved in his relationship with Allah than His saints and favourites, and as we descend down the sliding scale of divine preferences, this awareness decreases in direct proportion to the grades of the people who are seeking Allah's nearness and recognition. The divine hierarchy is based on these grades and the distinctions between these grades are meticulously drawn and followed.

Therefore, when a prophet of Allah, with his complete and unflawed awareness and understanding of divine pleasure and displeasure and in a posture of self-effacing courtesy and humility, prays to Allah, He graces each word

---

1. Tirmidhī related it in *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *da'awāt* (supplications) ch.82 (5:529#3505); Hākim in *al-Mustadrak* (1:505; 2:382-3) and graded it *sahīh,* also confirmed by Dhahabī; Ahmad bin Hambal in *Musnad* (1:170); Nasā'ī, *'Amal-ul-yawm wal-laylah*, p.416 (#656); Abū Ya'lā, *Musnad* (2:111#772); Bayhaqī, *Shu'ab-ul-īmān* (1:432#620); and Mundhirī in *at-Targhīb wat-tarhīb* (2:488).

uttered by him with recognition and fulfilment. And, if the prayer of a petitioner is processed through the prayer of the prophets, then it is not rejected as it is supported by the guarantee of a prophet's articulation; on the contrary, it finds immediate fulfilment and the prayee is relieved of his sense of anxiety and tension.

This phenomenon draws a clear distinction between two kinds of prayer: unmediated prayer and mediated prayer. In the case of unmediated prayer, the petitioner is like a lone ranger, he relies on his personal relationship with Allah, which is in itself invaluable because any creature can establish a hotline with Allah. But there is no divine guarantee for its acceptance, which may relate to his weak faith, lack of concentration or a number of other factors. But in the case of mediated prayer, there is a divine guarantee and it is the nature of divinity that its guarantee never fluctuates as it is immune to all glitches and other human uncertainties. Allah loves His favourites and His love increases in direct proportion to the graded distinction of His favourites. Prophets are the most favoured ones, therefore, any prayee that uses their prayer as a form of mediation is blessed with immediate acceptance.

CHAPTER FIVE

Intermediation through the Prophet (ﷺ)

The doctrine of intermediation through the holy Prophet (ﷺ)

The Prophethood and Messengership of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) continues uninterrupted even after his death. He still exists among us as the Prophet and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and this will continue down to the Day of Judgement, untarnished and unsullied. When all the other laws are still valid, why shouldn't the law of intermediation continue to be valid? When intermediation was permissible during his physical presence among us, there is no reason to disallow it after his death. The Qur'ān and the sunnah do not contain any injunction and statement which disallows the continuation of intermediation after the Prophet's death. If it was justified before his death, it is also justified after his death and both the Qur'ān and the sunnah support this view.

Four forms of intermediation through the holy Prophet (ﷺ)

There are four possible expressions of intermediation through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ):

1. Intermediation through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) before his birth.
2. Intermediation through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) during his physical existence.

3. Intermediation through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) after his death.
4. Intermediation through the Prophet’s relics.

All the four forms of intermediation are not only proved by the Qur’ān and the sunnah, but they are also being practised by our religious scholars whose knowledge of Islam is unflawed and whose credibility as human beings is impeccable. All these forms of intermediation will be illustrated in the following pages with irrefutable arguments from the Qur’ān and the sunnah.

SECTION ONE

Intermediation through the holy Prophet (ﷺ) before his birth

1. Adam's intermediation through the holy Prophet (ﷺ)

The process of intermediation through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is a continuous process and changes in fashion have never been able to hobble its popularity and effectiveness among the Muslims. It existed before his creation and during his physical life and it has continued to exist after his death and will continue to be popular and effective in future. It was Adam's practice to offer the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) as intermediary to Allah for the forgiveness of his lapses. When he chose the Prophet (ﷺ) as his intermediator, Allah condoned his act of disobedience. What could be a greater example of the immediate effectiveness of mediation when it is channelized through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ)?

Tabarānī, Bayhaqī, Ibn-ul-Mundhir and Suyūtī narrated this tradition through 'Umar bin al-Khattāb and 'Alī that

the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Adam was just about to repent for his act of disobedience that he suddenly recalled in his state of anxiety that he had seen *lā ilāha illallāhu Muhammad-ur-rasūlullāh* (there is no god but Allah, Muhammad is Allah's Messenger) inscribed on the Throne at the time of his birth." It obviously meant that the distinction the Prophet (ﷺ) possesses is denied to others. That is the reason his name was inscribed along with Allah's Own name. At this, he added these words of intermediation to his prayer for divine forgiveness:

> *(O Allah,) I beg Your forgiveness through the mediation of Muhammad (ﷺ).*

The tradition related by Ibn-ul-Mundhir has the following words:

> *O Allah, I beg Your forgiveness through Your beloved and most honoured servant Muhammad and through his distinction You have blessed him with.*[1]

By the addition of these words of intermediation, the prophet Adam's repentance was accepted immediately. Allah said, "In fact, Muhammad is the most beloved of all My creatures. Since you have intermediated your petition through him, I have granted it. And were it not for Muhammad, I would not have created you." Tabarānī

---

1. Suyūtī cites in *ad-Durr-ul-manthūr* (1:60).

further adds that Allah said, "He is the Last Prophet among your children."

Imam Hākim has phrased the tradition in these words:

> *Narrated by 'Umar bin al-Khattāb: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: When Adam committed the error, he submitted (to Allah): O Lord, I beg You to forgive me through the mediation of Muhammad. Then Allah said: O Adam! How did you recognize Muhammad as I have not created him yet? He replied: O Lord, when You created me with Your divine hand and breathed Your soul into me, I raised my head and saw '*lā ilāha illallāhu Muhammad-ur-rasūlullāh *(there is no god but Allah, Muhammad is Allah's Messenger)' inscribed on each pillar*

of the Throne. I discovered that with Your name, the name of only such a person can be associated who is Your most beloved of all the creatures. At this Allah said: O Adam, you have said it correctly. Of all the creatures I love him the most. Now when you offered your prayer through his mediation, I forgave you. And if Muhammad were not there, I would not have created even you.[1]

The tradition was transmitted through many chains and was related by Bayhaqī in *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (5:489); Tabarānī in *al-Mu'jam-ul-awsat* (7:259#6498) and *al-Mu'jam-us-saghīr* (2:82-3) with another chain containing sub-narrators unknown to Haythamī as he stated it in *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (8:253); Ibn 'Asākir in *Tahdhīb tārīkh Dimashq al-kabīr* generally known as *Tārīkh/Tahdhīb Ibn 'Asākir* (2:359-60); Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (1:131; 2:291-2); and Ibn Hajar Haythamī in *al-Jawhar-ul-muazzam* (p.61);.

This tradition is declared *sahīh* (sound) by Imam Hākim, though he acknowledges 'Abd-ur-Rahmān bin Zayd bin Aslam, one of its sub-narrators, as weak. However, when he mentions it he says, "Its chain is sound, and it is the first hadith of 'Abd-ur-Rahmān bin Zayd bin Aslam which I mention in this book." Imam Bulqīnī also declares this tradition sound in his *Fatāwā*. Subkī confirms Hākim's authentication in *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-*

1. Related by Hākim in *al-Mustadrak* (2:615).

il-anam (pp.120-1) although Ibn Taymiyyah's rejection and criticism was known to him and he rejects it.

Similarly a large number of hadith-experts have related in their books the event of Adam's prayer and his reliance on the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) as a form of intermediation. It may be noted that there is no inconsistency or contradiction between the words cited earlier and the words contained in these books because these words are the incremental part of the same prayer. This proves the fact that prayer through the mediation of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is, first of all, the practice of Adam (عليه السلام), and this is undeniably the holiest means for the acceptance of prayer.

Qastallānī has established in his *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (1:81-2; 4:594) with the help of various traditions the principle of prayer through the mediation of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Imam Zurqānī also confirms it in his *Commentary* (1:118-20; 12:220-1).

Hadith-expert, Ibn-ul-Jawzī cites this tradition in the first chapter of his book, *al-Wafā bi-ahwāl-il-Mustafā* (1:33) and considers it *sahīh* (sound). In the introduction of the book he says, "In this book I do not mix the sound hadith with the false." He also mentions the version of Maysarah on the same page whereby the holy Prophet (ﷺ) says, "When Satan deceived Adam and Eve, and they repented and sought intercession from Allah with my name." Ibn-ul-Jawzī also says in the chapter concerning "the Prophet's superiority over the other prophets" in the same book (1:359), "Part of the exposition of his superiority to other prophets is (the fact) that Adam (عليه السلام) asked his Lord through the sanctity (*hurmah*) of

Muhammad (ﷺ) that He relent towards him, as we have already mentioned."

Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī has initiated the discussion in the second section (*fasl*) of his *Nashr-ut-tīb* (p.20) with a reference to these traditions.

Even at the time of Adam's marriage with Eve, Adam (عليه السلام) was commanded to send blessings on the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and use them as a form of intermediation in his marriage contract. This has been recorded in *Salāt-ul-ahzān* by Ibn-ul-Jawzī. And Imam Ahmad as-Sāwī says in *Hāshiyah on Tafsīr-ul-Jalālayn* (1:23):

> *And that (divine) command was expressly given to introduce Adam (عليه السلام) to the glory and distinction of Muhammad (ﷺ) at the very beginning, that is, if he were not created, he would never have been blessed with a wife. So he is the real force for every form of intermediation, even for Adam's act of intermediation.*

Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī related this tradition in *Nashr-ut-tīb* (p.21).

The tradition of Adam's intermediation through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is also included by Qādī 'Iyād among the "sound and famous narrations" in *ash-Shifā* (1:227-8). He says that Abū Muhammad al-Makkī and Abū Layth as-Samarqandī mentioned it. He also cites another very similar

version through Ājurrī[1] (d.360), about whom Mullā 'Alī Qārī said, "al-Halabī said: This seems to be the Imam and spiritual guide Abū Bakr Muhammad bin Husayn bin 'Abdullāh al-Baghdādī, the compiler of the books *ash-Sharī'ah fis-sunnah*, *al-Arba'ūn*, and others."[2] This is also confirmed by Ibn Taymiyyah: 'it is related by Shaykh Abū Bakr al-Ājurrī, in his book *ash-Sharī'ah*.'[3]

Imam Suyūtī cites this hadith in his Qur'ānic interpretation *ad-Durr-ul-manthūr* (1:58) and in *al-Khasā'is-ul-kubrā* (1:6) and in *ar-Riyād-ul-anīqah fī sharh asmā' khayr al-khalīqah* (pp.48-9), where he says that Bayhaqī considers it sound.

In addition to these scholars of impeccable credibility, the narration of this tradition by experts in the field of compilation and transmission of tradition argues strongly in favour of the authenticity and validity of this tradition. As Bayhaqī said in the introduction to *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* that he only included sound narrations in his book.

The contemporary Makkan hadith-scholar Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī quotes Dhahabī's unrestrained endorsement of the traditions in Bayhaqī's *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* with his words, "You must take what is in it (*Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah*), for it consists entirely of guidance and light."[4]

---

1. Ājurrī narrated it in his *ash-Sharī'ah* (p.427).
2. Mullā 'Alī Qārī stated this in his *Commentary* on *ash-Shifā* (1:375-6).
3. Ibn Taymiyyah, *Qā'idah jalīlah fit-tawassul wal-wasīlah* (pp.84-5).
4. Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī, *Mafāhīm yajib an tusahhah* (p.127).

Zurqānī also transmitted Dhahabī's statement about Bayhaqī's *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* in his *Commentary* (1:120).

Similarly its inclusion by Ibn Taymiyyah in his *Fatāwā* (2:150) is also a clear proof of its strength and soundness, though he is generally regarded as a controversial scholar. As he quotes this version and another through Maysarah and says, "These two are like the elucidation of the authentic hadiths (concerning the same topic)." About this statement Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī said, "This indicates that Ibn Taymiyyah found the narration credible enough to be considered a witness for other narrations, because *mawdū'* (forged) and *bātil* (false) are not taken as witness by the people of hadith.[1]

In this holy tradition, when Adam (عليه السلام) uses the words *as'aluka bi-haqqi Muhammad* (I ask You through the mediation of Muhammad), and asks for the forgiveness of his error, Allah's mercy gushes out, and in this state of swinging upsurge, He conveys to him the glad tidings of his forgiveness by using the words *qad ghafartu laka* (I forgave you). Through this act, Adam (عليه السلام) has driven this message home to his progeny that in case they have committed a sin they should not be overburdened by a sense of guilt and sin and keep sulking in corners; on the contrary, they should pray to Allah through the mediation of the Holy Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) in their prayer and Allah shall forgive them. Adam (عليه السلام) is not making this statement as an abstraction as it is based on his own experience. A prayer is

1. Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī, *Mafāhīm yajib an tusahhah* (p.122).

instantly granted by Allah whenever the name of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is invoked in it. The Qur'ān says about it:

> *(O beloved!) And if they had come to you, when they had wronged their souls, and asked forgiveness of Allah, and the Messenger also had asked forgiveness for them, they (on the basis of this means and intercession) would have surely found Allah the Granter of repentance, extremely Merciful.*[1]

2. The Prophet (ﷺ) as a source of intermediation for Jews

Before the birth of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), the Jews offered in their prayers his means in order to gain victory over the rival Arab disbelievers and as a result of their prayer, they were rewarded with victory. The Qur'ān is a witness to this phenomenon. Allah says:

> *And when there came to them the Book from Allah (the Qur'ān) fulfilling the book (Torah in the real sense) which was with*

1. Qur'ān (*an-Nisā'*) 4:64.

them, and before that they themselves had (prayed) for victory (through the mediation of the last Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and the Book revealed to him) over the disbelievers. So when there came to them the same Prophet (Muhammad) with the Book revealed to him) whom they (already) knew, they rejected it.[1]

The Qur'ānic verse explains that the Messenger (ﷺ), through whom the Jews used to pray to gain victory over the Arab disbelievers, they rejected him when he physically appeared among them. They rejected him on the basis of prejudice and enmity though they possessed complete knowledge of his identity from the signs of his arrival. Since their rejection of the Prophet (ﷺ) was based on deliberate arrogance, Allah cursed them as an instant expression of the divine displeasure:

So there is Allah's curse on those who (intentionally) disbelieve.[2]

Allah flared up and cursed them because their rejection virtually amounted to the rejection of the Prophet's distinction as His last Prophet and Messenger (ﷺ). It is an exceptional divine reaction. Though the disbelievers are mentioned in the Qur'ān in a variety of contexts, the express divine curse is not related to all these situations. It finds expression only in situations where the divine wrath is sparked by an unpardonable sin. The frequency and the

---

1. Qur'ān (*al-Baqarah*) 2:89.
2. Qur'ān (*al-Baqarah*) 2:89.

intensity with which the disbelievers have been condemned and cursed by Allah in surah *al-Baqarah* and *al-Anfāl* is quite exceptional. If we study the context and background of these Qur'ānic verses, we will come to realize that the divine wrath is triggered on occasions where the disbelievers have denied the Prophet's glory and distinction, expressed their disapproval of his high status and relied on prejudice and jealousy in remembering him.

From the earliest times to the present-day, the meaning of this Qur'ānic verse favoured by the majority of interpreters has actually been attributed to Ibn 'Abbās. He narrated it in the *tafsīr* of 2:89 in *Tanwīr-ul-miqbās* (p.13). This verse refers to the prayer offered by the people of the Book themselves before the arrival of the last Prophet (ﷺ). They used him as a source of intermediation in their prayer to secure victory against the Arab disbelievers during wars. The words of their prayer are as follows:

> *O Allah, award us victory (over these disbelievers) through the mediation of the last Prophet whose glory and distinction we see in the Torah.*[1]

In some traditions, the Qur'ān is also associated with the name of the Prophet (ﷺ). The Jews are being particularly condemned for their self-contradictory attitude, which borders on sheer hypocrisy. They used to offer prayers of victory over the disbelievers through the

1. Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf 'an haqā'iq ghawāmid-it-tanzīl*, 1:123.

mediation of the holy Prophet (ﷺ) before his Prophethood, but when he physically arrived among them, they denied him and rejected his distinction as the last Prophet. Some of the traditions related to the issue are given below.

1. Imam Qurtubī

Imam Qurtubī related the tradition through Ibn ‘Abbās:

> *The Jews of Khaybar were often at war with the Ghatafān (tribe). When they confronted each other (in battle) the Jews were defeated. They attacked again, offering this prayer, "(O Lord,) we beg You through the mediation of the Unlettered Prophet (ﷺ) about whom You have promised us that you will send him to us at the end of time. Please help us against them." Ibn ‘Abbās adds: whenever they faced the enemy, they offered this prayer and defeated the Ghatafān (tribe). But when the Prophet (ﷺ) was sent, they denied (him). So Allah*

the Exalted revealed the verse: "And before that they themselves had (prayed) for victory (through the mediation of the last Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and the Book revealed to him) over the disbelievers," that is, through your mediation, O Muhammad.[1]

2. Mahmūd Ālūsī

He said:

This (verse) was revealed about Banū Qurayzah and Banū Nadīr who used to pray for victory over Aws and Khazraj before Allah's Messenger's Prophethood. Ibn 'Abbās and Qatādah have given expression to the same reality. It means that they prayed to Allah through his mediation for

1. Qurtubī, *al-Jāmi' li-ahkām-il-Qur'ān*, 2:27.

victory over the polytheists as also stated by as-Suddiyy: when the war raged between them and the polytheists, they opened the Torah and placed their hand on the spot where the Prophet (ﷺ) was mentioned and prayed, "O Allah, we pray to You through the mediation of Your Prophet You have promised with us to send him at the end of time; today grant us victory over our enemies." So (by the blessing of this prayer) they were made victorious.[1]

3. Imam Rāzī

He states while interpreting the verse (2:89):

Before the Prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ) and the revelation of the Qur'ān, the Jews prayed for victory, i.e. they asked victory and help (through their mediation) and they used these words: "O Allah, grant us victory through the Unlettered Prophet."[2]

1. Mahmūd Alūsī, *Rūh-ul-ma'ānī* (1:320).
2. Rāzī, *at-Tafsīr-ur-kabīr* (3:180).

4. Imam Jalāl-ud-Dīn Mahallī and Imam Jalāl-ud-Dīn Suyūtī

They write the Jews used to pray in these words:

O Allah, grant us victory through the mediation of the Prophet who is to appear at the end of time.[1]

5. Qādī Thanā'ullāh Pānī Patī

He says that the Jews prayed for victory over disbelievers:

That is, they prayed for victory over the Arab polytheists and they used to say: O Allah, give us victory over them through the mediation of the last Prophet whom we find mentioned in our Book Torah.[2]

6. Imam Ibn Kathīr

He says:

1. Mahallī and Suyūtī, *Tafsīr-ul-jalālayn* (p.14).
2. Qādī Thanā'ullāh Pānī Patī, *at-Tafsīr-ul-mazharī*, 1:94.

> *The Jews used to pray for victory over the Arab polytheists through the mediation of Muhammad (ﷺ).*[1]

7. Imam Suyūtī

He narrates two traditions on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās in this context as follows:

> *The Jews of Banū Qurayzah and Banū Nadīr used to pray for victory over the disbelievers and the infidels before the Prophethood of Muhammad. They said: O Allah, bless us with victory through the mediation of the Unlettered Prophet, and they were blessed with victory.*[2]

1. Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr-ul-Qur'ān al-'azīm* (1:124).
2. Suyūtī, *ad-Durr-ul-manthūr* (1:88).

> *The Jews of Medina, before the arrival of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), in their war against the (tribes of) Arab disbelievers – Asad, Ghatafān, Juhaynah and 'Udhrah – prayed for victory over them and sought help by invoking the name of Allah's Messenger. They said: O Allah, our Lord, grant us victory over them through the name of Your Prophet and through Your Book to be revealed to him whose Prophethood You have promised us at the end of time.*[1]

Similar traditions are narrated by:

1. 'Abdullāh bin Muslim bin Qutaybah, *Tafsir gharīb-il-Qur'ān* (p.58).
2. Ibn Jarīr Tabarī, *Jāmi'-ul-bayān fī tafsīr-il-Qur'ān* (1:325).
3. Baghawī, *Ma'ālim-ut-tanzīl* (1:93).
4. Abū al-Fadl al-Mībadī, *Kashf-ul-asrār wa 'uddat-ul-abrār* (1:272).
5. Ibn-ul-Jawzī, *Zād-ul-masīr fī 'ilm-it-tafsīr* (1:114).
6. Mujāhid bin Jubayr, *Tafsīr* (1:83).
7. Baydāwī, *Tafsīr* (1:122).
8. Nasafī, *al-Madārik* (1:61).
9. Khāzin, *Lubāb-ut-ta'wīl fī ma'ānī at-tanzīl* (1:65).
10. Muhammad bin Yūsuf Abū Hayyān Andalusī, *Tafsīr-ul-bahr-il-muhīt* (1:303).

1. Suyūtī, *ad-Durr-ul-manthūr* (1:88).

11. Ibrāhīm bin 'Umar Biqā'ī, *Nazm-ud-darar fī tanāsub-il-āyāt was-suwar* (2:36-7).
12. Muhammad bin 'Abd-ur-Rahmān Hasanī Husaynī, *Jāmi'-ul-bayān fī tafsīr-il-Qur'ān* (1:23).
13. Abū Sa'ūd 'Amādī, *Irshād-ul-'aql-is-salīm ilā mazāyā al-Qur'ān al-karīm* (1:128).
14. Ismā'īl Haqqī, *Tafsīr rūh-ul-bayān* (1:179).
15. Sulayman bin 'Umar, *al-Futūhāt-ul-ālihiyyah* (1:77-8).
16. Shawkānī, *Fath-ul-qadīr* (1:112).
17. Muhammad Rashīd Radā, *Tafsīr-ul-manār* (1:381).
18. Ibn Juzayy, *Kitāb-ul-tashīl li-'ulūm-it-tanzīl* (1:53).
19. Khatīb Shurbīnī, *as-Sirāj-ul-munīr* (1:76).
20. Wahbah Zuhaylī, *at-Tafsīr-ul-munīr* (1:219-20).
21. Tantāwī Jawharī, *al-Jawāhir fī tafsīr-il-Qur'ān al-karīm* (1:96).

Following traditionists and biographers also narrated the same tradition:

1. Hakim in *al-Mustadrak* (2:263).
2. Ājurrī in *ash-Sharī'ah* (pp.446-8).
3. Bayhaqī in *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (2:76-7).
4. Abū Nu'aym in *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (pp.44-5).
5. Ibn Kathīr in *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (2:274-5).

All these traditions show that, even before his Prophethood, the people of the Book offered his name to Allah as mediation. Since these traditions have been reproduced and recorded by scholars of spotless repute and integrity, they also serve to remove any doubt about their lack of authenticity or inferiority because any tradition that is generally accepted for detailed interpretation also claims general acceptance, and this tradition has been reproduced by all the exegetes who have lived during the last thousand

years; some of them under the title 'interpretation of Qur'ān through Qur'ān, while others under the title 'interpretation of Qur'ān through hadith.' The consensus of these scholars on its textual authenticity and semantic compatibility in different periods of time is a reflection of its significance and soundness. Those who are reluctant to accept them on the basis that they are drawn from the Jewish source should remember that there is no harm in drawing the truth from the Jewish sources. It is reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> *Accept the traditions from Banī Israel, there is no harm in it.*[1]

Justification for intermediation through the Prophet (ﷺ) after his death

Just as this Qur'ānic verse is a proof of intermediation through the Prophet (ﷺ) before his birth, similarly it is a proof of continuing intermediation even after his death. One may naturally ask how do we prove the fact of his mediation after death from this verse. The answer is simple and rational: if intermediation through him is valid before his birth, it is equally valid even after his death.

---

1. Bukhārī, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *ambiyā'* (prophets) ch.51 (3:1275#3274); Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, b. of *'ilm* (knowledge) 3:322 (#3662); Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *'ilm* (5:40#2669); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (2:159,202,474,502; 3:56); Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *al-Matālib-ul-'āliyah* (1:192#688;3:280#3478); Ibn Abū Shaybah, *al-Musannaf*, 9:62 (#6536); and Haythamī, *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (1:151).

The Jews who offered his mediation before his birth were not disbelievers. They believed in Allah and fought wars under the leadership of prophets and righteous people. They turned disbelievers only when the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) graced the earth with his illuminating presence. In the past, those people of the Book themselves trumpeted his arrival and propagated his exceptional qualities. They talked about him endlessly to their own children, praised and glorified him immeasurably and eagerly awaited his arrival. But what happened? At the arrival of the same Prophet of truth they had waited for years, and had talked about day and night and through whose mediation had prayed for victory, they turned against him despite their knowledge of his truthfulness and rejected his Messengership.

To sum up, the reliance of the Jews on his mediation in their prayers predates his arrival as the last Prophet on this earth. Therefore, the same logic that justified his mediation in the days preceding his birth, also justifies it in the days that follow his departure from this fugitive world. This is the only rational conclusion we can draw from the traditions I have cited about the relevance of the Prophet's name and person as a source of mediation.

SECTION TWO

Intermediation through the holy Prophet (ﷺ) during his physical existence

This is a distinction of the holy Prophet (ﷺ) that people relied on him as a means not only before his Prophethood but also before birth. In the last section it has been discussed how Adam (عليه السلام) first of all and then the Jews benefited from his mediation. When the former nations and communities prayed through him for victory over their enemies and for their own redemption, the Muslim community as his direct followers are far more deserving of this privilege. This is the reason the Qur'ān has furnished an irrefutable proof of the infinite blessings and rewards the Muslim community received through his mediation. The Companions depended on him as a source of intermediation and he never directed them to implore Allah directly. On the contrary, he himself educated them in making use of different modes of intermediation. The Qur'ānic arguments relating to intermediation through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) are discussed below:

First argument: Waiving of punishment against the Ummah through the holy Prophet's mediation

The Holy Qur'ān guides us in the following way about intermediation through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in his earthly existence:

> *And (the fact of the matter is that) it is unbecoming of Allah to inflict punishment on them while (O exalted friend,) you are also (present) among them, nor will Allah punish them in a state when they are seeking forgiveness (from Him).*[1]

From this it is evident that Allah has changed His universal system for the sake of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). The former nations fell victim to divine punishment when they crossed all limits of divine disobedience and refused to embrace the message of truth. In this way their disobedience incurred the divine wrath. Sometimes stones were hurled at them from the skies, at other times their faces were disfigured and at still other times, they were drowned in floods. In short, different types of punishment were wreaked on them, which clearly indicated that it was their outrageous act of disobedience that had invited the divine anger. But when the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) descended on this earth, Allah changed His rules and regulations. This

---

1. Qur'ān (*al-Anfāl*) 8:33.

reflects the glory and grandeur of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and the divine recognition of his exceptional status. It was for his sake alone that He waived His earthly punishments not only against the Muslims but also against the infidels, the Jews and the Christians. This waiver was not restricted to a specific time or era but became a universal and integral part of his Prophethood and Messengership. As long as his gracious presence as the Prophet and Messenger of Allah blesses this world, punishment will not visit the people who live on this earth. And there is no doubt that his Prophethood will continue till the Day of Judgement because on the basis of the Prophet's presence amongst us *(wa anta fīhim)*, his presence turned into a fountain-head of divine mercy. Therefore, as long as he is present among us, it is guaranteed by the Lord Himself that the Community will remain immune to all kinds of punishment. Thus the personality of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) has become a symbol of the absence of divine punishment.

Intermediation through the Prophet (ﷺ) is a precondition for the acceptance of repentance

The verse indicates two sources of access to divine nearness: one is the source of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and the other is the source of repentance. Both sources are means of immunity against divine punishment. Just as diplomats enjoy diplomatic immunity, people who repent and rely on the Prophet's mediation enjoy divine immunity. This immunity helps in stalling punishment. But Allah has given precedence to the Prophet's mediation over repentance as is reflected in their chronological order. First, He mentions the intermediation through the Holy Prophet

(ﷺ), and then He mentions repentance. The inference is transparent if one studies the verse dispassionately: repentance is actually contingent on the repentant's relationship with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). This relationship should not be a mere pretense, but it should be based on sincerity and devotion. Therefore, the repentance of only those persons will receive divine sanction who whole-heartedly believe in the integrity and finality of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Thus their repentance is conditional. People who repent should not only believe in him as a Prophet but also sincerely believe that even today he is with us and that he will continue to be with us till the Day of Judgement. When this belief is deeply entrenched in our hearts and minds, our repentance will acquire an incredible immediacy and lead to the waiving of punishment.

Challenge of infidels and disbelievers

Strangely enough, the infidels and the disbelievers cast blatant aspersions on the truth of the Holy Qur'ān. They flagrantly challenged the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) by saying that they did not believe in the Qur'ān and if the Qur'ān they denied was full of truth, then punishment should be inflicted on them. As the Qur'ān says:

> *And when they said (tauntingly), O Allah, if this (Qur'ān) that has come from You is the truth, then hurl stones on us (on*

> *account of its disobedience) or inflict on us some agonizing punishment.*[1]

The infidels posed this challenge to gauge the truth and veracity of the Qur'ān. But in reply to the challenge, Allah has pointed out in the adjacent verse: if my beloved were not among you, your arrogance and false pride would have been quashed like that of the earlier nations. This goes against the grain of My mercy, that on the one hand, My Beloved is present among you, and, on the other hand, I should wreak punishment on you. Thus the presence of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the infliction of divine punishment are mutually exclusive. The presence of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is a divine guarantee against the materialization of punishment because Allah has sent him as a means of mercy for all the worlds. The Qur'ān declares:

> *And (O great Messenger,) We have sent you but as mercy for all the worlds.*[2]

Here Allah makes it explicit that the extraordinary status of His beloved and its declaration in the 33rd verse of surah *al-Anfāl*, is what prevents Him from inflicting punishment on them, despite their sin and disobedience. Otherwise human history is a witness to the fact that rebels and challengers like them never enjoyed any immunity against divine punishment in any period and particularly those nations whose arrogant and supercilious behaviour had crossed all limits of human tolerance and decency and, therefore, invited His wrath. Some of them were cast in the

---

1. Qur'ān (*al-Anfāl*) 8:32.
2. Qur'ān (*al-Ambiyā'*) 21:107.

moulds of monkeys, others were drowned in water while still others lost their lives as a result of some deafening sound. In short, their disobedience was instantaneously retaliated with divine punishment.

Qur'ānic reply

This is noteworthy that the infidels and disbelievers, spurred on by their chronic philosophy of denial and denigration, challenged Allah to wreak punishment on them because they denied the truth of the Qur'ān. But the Qur'ānic reply, recorded in the adjacent verse, surprised them by posing a counterchallenge. The Qur'ān not only highlighted the dignity and merciful nature of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) but also declared his personality as a means of holding back divine punishment against the infidels and the disbelievers in their earthly existence.

This is endorsed by surah *Āl-i-'Imrān* which stresses the guarantee of the presence of the holy Prophet (ﷺ) as a means of guidance. Allah says:

> *And how would you (now) disbelieve while you are (among those fortunates) that to you are rehearsed the verses of Allah, and His Messenger (himself) is in your midst? And whoever holds fast to Allah's (lap), is indeed guided towards the right path.*[1]

1. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-'Imrān*) 3:101.

What precedes this verse is the Qur'ānic assertion that the Jews and the Christians employed an assortment of devices to persuade the Muslims to return to disbelief. The filthiest device used by them was their tantalizing attitude which helped them generate an ambience of suspense and uncertainty to sow seeds of doubt among the Muslims. They posed themselves as Muslims in the morning and turned disbelievers in the evening claiming that Islam did not suit their temper. But the conspiracy that operated behind this line of action was based on the belief that the weaklings among the Muslims would be inspired by their return to disbelief and, as a result, follow in their footsteps, jettisoning Islam and embracing disbelief. In fact, it was a heinous strategy to disenchant the Muslims with Islam. But it was unveiled by Allah and, on account of the presence of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) among them, the designs of these turncoats were hopelessly frustrated. In addition, the context of the verse also serves as a certificate of solace and consolation for those Muslims who seem vulnerable to doubt and vacillation, and this certificate is not a form of abstraction; it draws nourishment from the personality of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) himself. Allah is in fact saying that those who are assailed by doubt and suspicion and are in constant fear of losing their faith, should turn to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) as a source of strength and stability. If they act on this prescription, they will never return to disbelief after they have embraced Islam. Thus the prescription for retaining a steady and unwavering faith is to hold on firmly to the Qur'ān and the Messenger of Allah. The two means are the strongest pillars on which the structure of Islamic faith can be raised.

Subtle point

In this Qur'ānic verse, the need and significance of belief in Messengership is being emphasized. What is being emphasized here is not the presence of the Qur'ān among them, but the presence of the Messenger (ﷺ). The Qur'ān could have emphasized the simultaneity of their presence: how could you return to disbelief as the Qur'ān as well as the Messenger (ﷺ) is present among you. But this mode of presentation is deliberately eschewed, unravelling a specific divine purpose. When He referred to His own Book, He stated that the verses of Allah are rehearsed to you. It means that the mere presence of the book carries no guarantee of protection against return to disbelief, therefore, it posits the presence of someone who will rehearse the verses, and it is His beloved who rehearses these verses to us. Thus the Qur'ān, referring to the Prophet's duty of articulating these verses, claims:

(And) a Messenger (has been sent) who rehearses to you Allah's verses.[1]

Allah makes it explicit through these verses that whatever benefit you draw from the Qur'ān is through the Messenger's rehearsal. Thus the benefit from the Qur'ān is operational only if it is processed through the mediation of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), otherwise, you shall be doomed forever. As Allah says:

1. Qur'ān (*at-Talāq*) 65:11.

> *Allah, by means of a single act, makes many people go astray, and guides many others.*[1]

Even in this condition, they shall have the Qur'ān, but some of them will earn only deviation from the right path. Then He declared:

> *And whoever holds fast to Allah's (lap), is indeed guided toward the right path.*[2]

Now the question arises how to identify Allah's lap, that is, approach to Him? The approach to Allah leads through the Prophet (ﷺ). Any attempt to gain access to the Lord by bypassing him is an exercise in futility. In the Qur'ānic language, the servitude of the Prophet (ﷺ) is in fact abstaining from sin in obedience to God's will. Therefore, if you hold on firmly to him, you are following the will of the Lord as you cast yourself in the Prophet's mould and guidance becomes your destiny. Thus, clinging to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and emulating his way of life is a guarantee of immunity against any return to disbelief.

Second argument: Forgiveness of the Companions through the Prophet's mediation

The episode relates to the battle of Uhud. Some of the Companions had been posted at a specific spot (pass) by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) who had stressed upon them not to

---

1. Qur'ān (*al-Baqarah*) 2:26.
2. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-'Imrān*) 3:101.

budge from their place whether the Muslims scored a victory or suffered a defeat. But some of them left their place of duty to grab the spoils of war. As a result, the infidels of Makkah pounced upon them from behind which bewildered the Muslims, and created a stampede in their ranks. A number of the Companions received martyrdom on account of the unexpected enemy attack. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) recalled the scattered Companions and inspired by his motivational address, they fought a pitched battle and inflicted a humiliating defeat on the enemy. The next day after they had returned from the battle of Uhud, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) asked them to get ready for another battle. Though the Companions were lacerated with injuries and exhausted by overexertions, unprotestingly capitulated to the Prophet's command. Both Allah and the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) felt pity at their spirit of sacrifice and Allah decided to forgive them for their lapses, for example, (1) to leave the pass for collecting the spoils of war, and (2) to leave the Prophet (ﷺ) alone and unguarded on the battlefield, which had caused great loss to the Muslim army as well as resulted in a facial injury to the Prophet (ﷺ). It was no doubt a grave offence, but their readiness to plunge into another battle soon after the battle of Uhud and, inspired by the spirit of jihad, their readiness for self-sacrifice, deeply touched the strings of divine passion, and Allah commanded the Holy Prophet (ﷺ):

> *So you should overlook their faults and ask forgiveness for them.*[1]

---

1. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-'Imrān)* 3:159.

This Qur'ānic verse recommends forgiveness for the Companions. It clearly implies that the certificate of forgiveness cannot be issued to the Companions unless it is processed through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), that is, unless it includes the Prophet's mediation as an instrument of their forgiveness.

The point to be emphasized here is the reversal of priority. Allah, being the Lord and the Master, can act independently of any creature, and by virtue of His inherent independence, He is the Master of forgiveness while the Prophet (ﷺ) is His creature and, by virtue of his creaturely status, depends entirely on Him. But Allah, out of His love for the Prophet (ﷺ), has deliberately reversed the priority. The Master wants to forgive and says to the one who is dependent on Him: O My beloved, I want to forgive your Companions, but first of all you should forgive them and then ask Me for their forgiveness so that I should forgive them on your recommendation. This fact has been given poetic expression by Ahmad Radā Khān. He has described how the Creator, in His capacity as the Lord and the Master, is conferring special honour on His own creature by giving precedence to His consent even over His own. He says that here the consent of the Master depends on the consent of the servant which turns the normal pattern of expectation upside down by eliminating the distinction between you and Me, between the Lover and the beloved, between the Master and the servant. Though the status of the creature is incomparable with that of the Creator Who is the Lord and Master of all the worlds, yet in this Qur'ānic verse, the element of comparison is being consciously underplayed by the Creator Himself and, through an act of

voluntary surrender, He is raising the status of His creature to extraordinary heights of glory and excellence by the protocol of love, and not by the protocol of grade. He has not only edged out the "you-me" distinction, but is also giving priority to the creature's consent even over His own. If God had intended to retain the distinction between Himself and His creature, He would never have made it contingent on the creature's will. This by no means implies that the creature has all of a sudden grown into the Creator or surpassed Him in excellence. It only suggests the exceptional stature of the creature, which has been conferred on him by his Creator. It dissolves all distinctions between the creature and the Creator as both are bonded together in the relation of love, and not in the relation of grade.

Third argument: Medina as the source of charity of intercession

The following Qur'ānic verse furnishes a strong argument in favour of intermediation through the Prophet (ﷺ) in his existence on the earth:

(O beloved!) And if they had come to you, when they had wronged their souls, and asked forgiveness of Allah, and the Messenger also had asked forgiveness from them, they (on the basis of this means and intercession) would have surely found Allah

> *the Granter of repentance, extremely Merciful.*[1]

Through this verse, Allah is directing the believers towards the most appropriate mode of repentance. Whenever they commit a sin or an error, they should ask forgiveness of Allah through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Allah will forgive them on the basis of this mediation. The verse makes the divine intention quite explicit and transparent. It also implies that, among the many modes of repentance available to the believers, the most effective mode is to seek Allah's forgiveness through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). His intercession will be a guarantee of its immediate acceptance. And this Qur'ānic injunction applied not only to his earthly existence but shall remain valid even after his death.

Fourth argument: Return of eyesight through the Prophet's mediation

In addition to the Qur'ānic verses, the sayings of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) provide a clear proof that the believers relied on him as a source of intermediation in his earthly life. Besides, he himself commanded people to depend on him as a source of intermediation as has been narrated by 'Uthmān bin Hunayf:

1. Qur'ān (*an-Nisā'*) 4:64.

> *That a blind man called on the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and said to him: '(O Messenger of Allah,) pray to Allah to give me solace'. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: 'if you wish, I will stall it and this is better for you.' He said: 'you should pray for me to Him.' So he asked him to perform the ablution: 'perform the ablution thoroughly well and then offer two cycles of optional prayer and beseech Allah with this supplication: "O Allah, I appeal to You, and submit to You through the mediation of the merciful Prophet Muhammad. O Muhammad, through your mediation I submit myself to My Lord to have my need granted. O Allah, acknowledge his intercession in my favour."'*[1]

---

1. Ibn Mājah transmitted it in his *Sunan*, b. of *iqāmat-us-salāt was-sunnah fīhā* (establishing prayer and its sunnahs) ch.189 (1:441#1385); Tirmidhī in *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *da'awāt* (supplications) ch.119 (5:569#3578); Ahmad bin Hambal in his *Musnad* (4:138); Nasā'ī, *'Amal-ul-yawm wal-laylah* (p.417#658-9); Hākim, *al-Mustadrak* (1:313,519); Ibn Khuzaymah, *as-Sahīh* (2:225-6#1219); Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (6:166); Subkī, *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (p.123); Nawawī, *al-Adhkār* (p.83); Ibn-ul-Athīr, *Asad-ul-ghābah* (3:571); Yūsuf Mizzī, *Tuhfat-ul-ashrāf bi-ma'rifat-il-atrāf* (7:236#9760); Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:558); Ibn Hajar Haythamī, *al-Jawhar-ul-*

Ibn Mājah, Hākim and Dhahabī have declared it a sound (*sahīh*) tradition while Tirmidhī graded it *hasan* (fair) *sahīh, gharīb* (unfamiliar or rare).

Similarly, another tradition narrated by Imam Hākim is couched in different words. In this tradition, 'Uthmān bin Hunayf says that he was present in the Prophet's company. A blind person called on the Prophet (ﷺ) and complained about the loss of his eyesight. He added: 'O Messenger of Allah, there is no one to guide me and I am in great trouble.' On hearing his complaint, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> *Bring an earthen pot for ablution, then perform the ablution and offer two cycles of optional prayer. Then say: "O Allah, I appeal to You, and submit to You through the mediation of Your merciful Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). O Muhammad, through your mediation I submit myself to your Lord that He should give light to my eyes. O Allah, acknowledge his intercession in my*

---

munazzam (p.61); and Shawkānī in *Tuhfat-udh-dhākirīn* (pp.194-5).

favour and accept my supplication also in my favour." 'Uthmān bin Hunayf says: I swear by Allah that we had neither left the company nor had we carried on a long conversation that the man entered (with his sight fully restored) and it seemed as if he had never been blind.[1]

In addition, a number of other traditionists of great repute have recorded this sound tradition and their names are given below:

1. Nasā'ī, *'Amal-ul-yawm wal-laylah* (p.418#660).
2. Bukhārī, *at-Tārīkh-ul-kabīr* (6:209-10).
3. Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (4:138).
4. Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (6:166-7).
5. Ibn-us-Sunnī, *'Amal-ul-yawm wal-laylah* (p.202#622).
6. Mundhirī, *at-Targhīb wat-tarhīb* (1:473-4).
7. Subkī, *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (pp.123-4).
8. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:559).
9. Suyūtī, *al-Khasā'is-ul-kubrā* (2:201).
10. Qastallānī, *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (4:594).
11. Zurqānī, *Commentary* (12:221-2).

Mahmūd Sa'īd Mamdūh has also expressed his views in his book *Raf'-ul-Minārah* (p.123):

"All these chains are sound which have been certified by persons who have committed the traditions to memory. Among these are also included Imam Tirmidhī, Tabarānī, Ibn Khuzaymah, Hākim and Dhahabī."

---

1. Hākim graded it *sahīh* (sound) in *al-Mustadrak* (1:526-7) according to the conditions of Imam Bukhārī and its authenticity has been acknowledged by Dhahabī as well.

This sacred tradition clearly indicates that the creature is imploring Allah Who Alone can help him and provide relief to him. He Alone has the power to transform non-existence into existence, non-entity into entity. But the point to be noted here is that the words of the supplication are being taught by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) himself in which God's attention and help are being invoked for its acceptance through his own mediation. It may be further noted that it is not only his person that is being relied upon for the acknowledgement of the prayer, but also the quality of his mercy that he has been vested with through Allah's kindness. Thus the prayer boils down to the fact that the petitioner is saying: O Allah, I appeal to You through the mediation of the Prophet (ﷺ) whom You have Yourself vested with infinite mercy that You should restore my lost eyesight and return light to my eyes which they have lost.

Since the prayer was processed through the Prophet's mediation, the Lord's mercy gushed forth instantly as it is against the divine will that some petitioner should invoke His mercy through the mediation of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and his petition should not be granted. In this case the grant of the prayer was neither delayed nor was the phenomenon of cause-and-effect allowed to interfere in its acceptance. It was the blessing of the Prophet's mediation which returned the eyesight instantly as if it had never been lost.

Fifth argument: Descending of rain through the Prophet's mediation

During the life of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) whenever there was a dry spell on account of a prolonged absence of rain and signs of drought appeared, the Companions used to

request him to pray for rain though they themselves could have done it. There is no doubt that they were men of knowledge and possessed a greater understanding of religion than us, but they were also deeply aware of the difference between the ordinary servants of the Lord and His special servants. They knew too well that the prayer of an ordinary servant can be rejected but that of His favoured ones invariably finds His approval. And this was the rationale behind the Companion's request to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) to pray for the alleviation of their difficulties and problems. They wanted to impress upon the believers the distinction between ordinary people and Allah's most favoured ones. They capitulated willingly to this divinely established hierarchical grading and they expected all believers to recognize and respect the special status Allah had conferred on His special servants, and this recognition of their extraordinary status should be ungrudgingly accepted because Islam is primarily a religion of submission to the will of the Lord. So whenever there was shortfall of rain and there were apprehensions of drought, the Companions approached the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and then witnessed the sight of God's mercy with their own eyes. The Prophet's prayer brought rain in the flash of a second. There is a frequent reference to such faith-boosting occurrences in the books on hadith. Below are recorded some of these occurrence to illustrate the fact that intermediation through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is a direct source of bliss for the helpless and embattled people because whenever he prayed to the Lord, his prayer was immediately granted. This is an inherent feature of the Prophet's supplication. It is out of the question that Allah

should discard his supplication because it is a promise made by Himself that whenever His beloved prays to Him, his prayer would be granted, and without any delay.

First happening

When the Prophet (ﷺ) himself was a child, there was a severe drought, not a drop of water to drink and people only looked at the sky wistfully for the unexpected rain. They had grown weary out of hunger. Their sobs and sighs dissolved in tears but to no avail. Not a single cloud appeared in the sky. At last, when all strategies to bring down the rain had fizzled out, Abū Tālib thought of praying through the mediation of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). He led all the people to a wide open space. Abū Tālib held the child in his arms, lifted him towards the sky and said: "O Lord, confer on us the gift of rain through the source of this handsome child, we submit his means to you." He repeated these words three times. The sky that was used to raining fire and had been lying cloudless for a long time, was suddenly overcast with clouds. Jet-black clouds floated all around and it started raining. It rained in torrents and the drainpipes of the houses started flowing like gushing rivulets.[1]

Second happening

About forty-five years after this happening when the Banī Hāshim tribe was under house arrest in Abū Tālib's

---

1. Suhaylī narrated it in *ar-Rawd-ul-anf* (1:179); Qastallānī in *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (4:272-3) who said that Ibn 'Asākir transmitted it and Zurqānī also certified it in his *Commentary* (11:143-4).

mountain pass, Abū Tālib wrote a passionate panegyric which also referred to this happening. He warned the residents of Makkah that he would never hand over to them such a blessed person. On the contrary, they would sacrifice their lives, children and property in his defence. People who think that we will surrender to them our most precious treasure are sadly mistaken. One of the verses of this panegyric translates as follows:

> *And the one with the illumined face, whose lighted face acts as a means of bringing down rain, who is the supporter of orphans and a redresser of the complaints of widows.*

Ibn 'Umar says: 'I often recalled this verse of Abū Tālib whenever I looked at the face of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) praying for rain. He had hardly stepped down the pulpit that the drainpipes started flowing.' We come to know through Ibn 'Umar's words that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) received frequent requests from people to pray for rain and, through the instrumentality of his prayer, it started raining. The tradition is recorded in these words:

'Abdullāh bin Dīnār is reported to have heard it from his father who said: I heard it from Ibn 'Umar who used to recite Abū Tālib's verse: "And the one with the illumined face whose lighted face acts as a means of bringing down rain, who is the supporter of orphans and a redresser of the complaints of widows." And 'Umar bin Hamzah said that Sālim has reported to us from his father ('Abdullāh bin 'Umar) that I sometimes recalled this verse by the poet and sometimes looked at the lighted face of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) when he prayed for rain, and had hardly stepped down the pulpit that the drainpipes started flowing gushingly. "And the one with the illumined face whose lighted face acts as a means of bringing down rain, who is the supporter of orphans and a redresser of the complaints of widows."[1]

1. Bukhārī narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *istisqā'* (to invoke Allah for rain at the time of drought) ch.3 (1:342#963); Ibn Mājah, *Sunan,* b. of *iqāmat-us-salāt was-sunnah fīhā* (establishing prayer and its sunnahs) ch.154 (1:405#1272); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (2:93); Bayhaqī in *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (6:142-3) and

Third happening

Different traditions are narrated through Anas bin Mālik in this context. Some of them are:

> *Once the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) was delivering the Friday sermon among us that suddenly a man approached him and said to him: 'O Messenger of Allah, it has not rained since ages. You should pray for us that Allah may saturate us with rain.' So he prayed for them and it started raining, we hardly returned to our homes that the rain began to fall and it continued down to the next Friday. Again the same person or*

---

as-Sunan-ul-kubrā (3:352); Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:471-2); Yūsuf Mizzī, *Tuhfat-ul-ashrāf bi-ma'rifat-il-atrāf* (5:359#6775); Badr-ud-Dīn 'Aynī, *'Umdat-ul-qārī* (7:29-31); and Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī in *Fath-ul-bārī* (2:494).

someone else stood up and said to him: 'O Messenger of Allah, pray for us that Allah should divert this rain to some other place.' So the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) prayed: 'O Allah, bring down the rain not on us but on the areas around and about us.' I saw that instantly the cloud rolled away right and left. It rained in all the areas except in Medina.[1]

1. Bukhārī related it in *as-Sahīh,* b. of *istisqā'* (to invoke Allah for rain at the time of drought) ch.7 (1:344-5#969); Muslim, *as-Sahīh,* b. of *salāt-ul-istisqā'* (prayer to invoke Allah for rain at the time of drought) ch.2 (2:614-5#897); Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (6:140); Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:472-3); and Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī in *Fath-ul-bārī* (2:508).

That a person entered the mosque through the door in front of the pulpit and the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) was delivering the sermon while standing. So that person took a position right in front of him. Then he said: 'O Messenger of Allah, the cattle have died and the paths are disconnected. So pray to Allah that He should send rain on us.' (Anas says that) the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) raised both of his hands and addressed (Allah): 'O Allah, send us rain; O Allah, send us rain; O Allah, send us rain.' Anas said: By Allah! We could see neither a cloud in the sky, nor even a fragment of a cloud, and there was neither a house nor any other building between us and the mountain. Then a piece of cloud, that was the size of a shield, appeared from behind the hill. It started floating in the sky and then it spread out, and it started raining. By

God! For six days we did not see the sun in the sky. Then the next Friday another person entered through the same door while the Prophet (ﷺ) was delivering the sermon in the standing posture. He positioned himself in front of him and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, the cattle have died and the paths are disconnected, so pray to Allah that he should stop the rain.' Anas relates that the Messenger (ﷺ) again raised his hands and addressed (Allah), 'O Allah, (the rain) may fall around us, and not on us; O Allah, (the rain) may fall on the hills, hillocks, valleys and the places where the trees grow.' Anas says that the rain stopped and we came out (of the mosque) and we were walking in the sunshine. Sharīk said, 'I asked Anas: was it the same person who had come before?' He said, 'I don't know.'[1]

---

1. Bukhārī related it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *istisqā'* (to invoke Allah for rain at the time of drought) ch.6,5,7,8,9,10,11,20,23 (1:343-6,348,349#968,967,969-73,983, 986), b. of *jumu'ah* (Friday prayer) ch.33(1:315-6#891); Muslim, *as-Sahīh,* b. of *salāt-ul-istisqā'* (prayer to invoke Allah for rain at the time of drought) ch.2 (2:612-4#897); Nasā'ī, *Sunan,* b. of *istisqā*' (3:154-5, 159-60, 161-3); Ibn Mājah, *Sunan,* b. of *iqāmat-us-salāt was-sunnah fīhā* (establishing prayer and its sunnahs) ch.154 (1:404#1269); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (3:256); Mālik bin Anas, *al-Muwattā*, b. of *istisqā'*, ch.2 (1:191#3); Abū Ya'lā, *Musnad* (5:416#3104); Ibn Khuzaymah, *as-Sahīh,* (3:144,147#1788,1792); Ibn Hibbān, *as-Sahīh* (3:272-3#992); Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (3:354-5) and *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (6:139-40); Baghawī, *Sharh-us-sunnah* (4:412-5#1166-7); Zayla'ī, *Nasb-ur-rāyah* (2:238-9); Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:472); Qastallānī, *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (4:265-6); and Zurqānī in his *Commentary* (11:120-5).

Once during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) famine gripped Medina. The Prophet (ﷺ) was delivering the Friday sermon to us that a person stood up and said, 'O Messenger of Allah, the horses and the goats have died. So pray to Allah that He may send us rain.' The Prophet (ﷺ) raised his holy hands and prayed. Anas relates that (at that time) the sky was as (transparent) as cutglass. (But on account of the Prophet's prayer,) the breeze blew instantly and the clouds came over. Then they grew quite

dense and then the sky opened its mouth wide (that is, it started raining in torrents). We came out from there and (drenched in rain and) almost drowning in water, we reached our homes. The rain did not stop till the next Friday. The same day the same person or someone else stood up and said, 'O Messenger of Allah, the houses have collapsed, so pray to Allah that this may stop.' He smiled and then prayed (to Allah) that rain may fall around us, and not on us. So I saw that the clouds had rolled away from Medina (and Medina appeared) as if it was crowned by the sky.

In another tradition, Anas relates that Allah shows to the people the blessing of His Prophet (ﷺ) and the acceptance of his prayers.[1]

---

1. Bukhārī transmitted it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *manāqib* (virtues) ch.22 (3:1313#3389), b. of *jumu'ah* (Friday prayer) ch.32 (1:315#890), b. of *istisqā'* (to invoke Allah for rain at the time of drought) ch.13 (1:346-7#975), b. of *adab* (good manners) ch.68 (5:2261#5742), b. of *da'awāt* (supplications) ch.23 (5:2335#5982); Muslim, *as-Sahīh,* b. of *salāt-ul-istisqā'* (prayer to invoke Allah for rain at the time of drought) ch.2 (2:614-5#897); Nasā'ī, *Sunan,* b. of *istisqā'* (3:165-6); Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan,* b. of *salāt* (prayer) 1:304-5 (#1174); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (3:271); Abū Ya'lā, *Musnad* (6:82#3334); Ibn Khuzaymah, *as-Sahīh* (3:145-6#1789); Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (3:353-4, 356, 357) and *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (6:140); Baghawī, *Sharh-us-sunnah* (4:415-6#1168); and Ibn Kathīr in *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:474).

Fourth happening

It happened after his Prophethood. The country was in the grip of famine. Once a villager came crying to him and pointed to him graphically the trouble and devastation caused by the drought. He depicted the afflictions of the affected people poetically in these terms:

O Messenger of Allah, our miserable situation has driven us to seek your help, to request you to pray for us. Young girls are forced to work on account of poverty and their breasts are bleeding due to overexertion. The sanguine situation has made people so self-centred that even a kind and affectionate person such as a mother has grown indifferent to her child. And on account of the physical debility caused by hunger, the child is lying senseless and exhausted, and neither a sour nor a sweet word is coming out of his mouth. There is nothing for people to eat except useless wild grass or the food that has been damaged by the affliction.

O Master! Our struggle is confined only to you, and people have access to no one else but the messengers.

On hearing the complaint, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) became restless, and he ascended the pulpit, his shawl trailing behind and spread his hands in a posture of prayer: "O Allah, You are infinitely Kind and Merciful. Bring down on them the beneficial continuous torrential rain that may breathe life into the dead skeletons, fill the breasts with milk and give vitality to the land."

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) had hardly touched his face with his spread palms to indicate the end of his prayer that the sky was overcast with clouds and they showered rain on the land so copiously that the entire area was saturated with water. The land wore a spring-clean look as it had been thoroughly washed by rain. The rain continued till people from adjacent areas came running to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said to him: 'O Messenger of Allah, everything is about to sink due to excess of rain. Please pray that the rain should stop, otherwise, it will wash away everything.' People who had been deprived of water for a long time were so saturated with the divine mercy and blessing that they started grumbling against the narrow capacity of their valleys and canals. On account of the immediate acceptance of his prayer, the coming down of rain, its excess and the mixed reaction of his followers, he felt so elated that a pleasant smile spread over his face. It seemed as if spring had returned to the parched land. In that joyful state he said:

> *May God bless Abū Tālib. If he were here, this sight would surely have cooled his eyes (he would have felt very happy). Who will recite to us his verse?*

'Alī felt overjoyous on hearing this from the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and said to him: perhaps you would like to listen to this verse:

> *And the one with the illumined face, whose lighted face acts as a means of bringing down rain, who is the supporter of orphans and a redresser of the complaints of widows.*

Meanwhile, a poet from the tribe of Kinānah stood up and he expressed his appreciation in the form of these verses: 'O Allah, we articulate Your praise and this praise is from Your servants who are grateful to You because we have been blessed with rain through the lighted face of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). He prayed to his Lord and at the same time he raised his eyes and looked towards the sky. Hardly a fraction of a second had passed that we saw the pearls of rain. He is a spitting image of the words in which his uncle Abū Tālib has cast him – he is handsome and has a face that gives out light and luminosity. So, whoever is grateful to Allah is ultimately blessed, and whoever is ungrateful, is cursed with the worst.' The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) was immensely pleased by the spontaneous expression of his sincere feelings and said:

> *If poets are capable of saying fine things, you have certainly given expression to something fine.*[1]

---

1. Badr-ud-Dīn 'Aynī narrated it in *'Umdat-ul-qārī* (7:31); Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *Fath-ul-bārī* (2:495); Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (6:141-2); Subkī, *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (pp.126-8); Ibn Hishām, *as-Sīrat-un-nabawiyyah* (1:280-1); Qastallānī, *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (4:271); and Zurqānī in his *Commentary* (11:139-41).

Fifth happening

Another similar happening is recorded in the books on tradition and the life of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) which is sumned up as follows:

> When the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) had returned from the battle of Tabūk, the afflected people of Fazārah tribe called on him and complained to him about their backwardness, poverty and sense of economic deprivation caused by lack of rain. He (ﷺ) took pity on them and prayed to the Lord for rain. As a result of his prayer, it rained in buckets and it continued uninterrupted for eight days. The next Friday someone requested the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) for the rain to stop. He prayed: 'O Allah, let it rain around and about us but not on us,' and Allah granted his prayer.[1]

Summary of the discussion

In the preceding pages we discussed in detail the reliance on the Prophet's mediation during his earthly life in the light of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. And this mediation was not restricted to a specific issue but it was applied invariably to all religious and worldly matters as the Companions used to pray to God through his means. The

1. Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (6:143-4); Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:476-7); Qastallānī, *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (4:269-70); Zurqānī, *Commentary* (11:133-8).

traditions we have described amply prove that the Prophet's mediation was relied upon in all matters ranging from disease, pain, difficulty, faith, forgiveness of sins to the economic deprivation of the people. In short, people depended on his mediation in all religious and secular matters and he also prayed to the Lord for all kinds of people. He never discouraged them from coming to him for prayer. He never told them: 'Allah is even closer to you than your main artery, so stay at your homes and pray to Him directly.' On the other hand, he commended the people for coming to the right place which clearly indicated that Allah Himself had guided them to approach him for the fulfilment of their wishes and the realization of their needs. This particular guidance provided by Allah Himself to the needy is a clear proof of the fact that intermediation through the prophets and the messengers is a valid and commendable act.

SECTION THREE

Intermediation through the holy Prophet (ﷺ) after his death

1. God's bounty through the Prophet's mediation

Allah says:

> *We help everyone, those (who desire the world) and those (who desire the Hereafter). (O honoured friend! All this is) the bounty from your Lord, and the bounty of your Lord is not closed (to anyone).*[1]

The choice of the pronoun in this Qur'anic verse is quite significant. The verse is not phrased as "all this is the bounty from **their Lord**," but, on the other hand, it is phrased as "all this is the bounty from **your Lord**." There

1. Qur'an (*al-Isrā'*) 17:20.

is no doubt that the bounty is from the Lord, but the collocation “your Lord” shifts the focus of attention from the Lord to the Prophet (ﷺ), from the Creator to the creature. That is, by the prefixation of the pronoun “your” to the Lord, Allah has deliberately and pointedly elevated the stature of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) above all other creatures.

It means that whatever a creature acquires in this world, he acquires it through the means of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), and the process of acquisition is unending, i.e., the creature will continue to acquire it as long as he is alive, but it will be invariably filtered through the person of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). The devolution of power here is unmistakable. God is devolving the divine power to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) by making it explicit that divine recognition is contingent on the Prophet’s recognition.

The first part of the Qur'anic verse delineates the divine system. In this system, it is the Lord who freely bestows bounties on everyone and helps each one of His creatures. The second part is in the form of a declaration: O beloved Prophet, whatever a person receives in this world, whatever bounty is bestowed on him and whatever he is blessed with, is the blessing of your Lord.

Here the normal expectations are not fulfilled which would have preferred the phrase ‘*atā’i rabbihim* (the bounty of their Lord) in place of ‘*atā’i rabbika* (the bounty of your Lord) because the general addressee of the verse is mankind, and not any specific person. God is telling human beings, in unambiguous terms, that their achievements are not the result of personal effort but they are the blessings from the Lord. But the Qur'anic verse reverses the normal

order of expectation. God is consciously trying to impress upon the people that whatever is bestowed upon them, and whatever they have acquired, is the bounty from the beloved's Lord, and they have received all these bounties through the beloved's means. The reason that God is being so explicit is that these people may not entertain any illusions about their personal accomplishment because their achievements are not the outcome of their personal struggle but they have received all this through the instrumentality of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

Here the question arises about the nature of His Lordship. Is He not the Lord of all those He is helping? He is their Lord also and that is why He helps them. If He had not been their Lord, He would never have declared, "We help everyone." If He is their Sustainer also, then why did He, in this context, particularly declare, "All this is the bounty from your Lord?"

The answer is that He intends to impress upon the believers the extraordinary status of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). He means to bring home to them the fact that, though all blessings emanate from Him, these are doled out to them as blessings of Allah's beloved (ﷺ). So this verse is communicating to them the exceptional stature of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in the current idiom:

> *"Whether you believe it or not, we believe."*
>
> *"Whatever God gives, He gives it by virtue of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ)."*

This is our faith and this faith is based on truth and certitude. Besides, the word *rabbika* (your Lord) is also unravelling the fact that the beloved of the Lord is as unique as the Lord Himself. Just as there is only one Lord, similarly there is only one beloved, and the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is the unique beloved. His status among the creatures is unique because he is the practical manifestation of all the divine attributes and the universe is a concrete illustration of all these qualities. That is why he makes it clear that all these bounties are the bounties from your Lord.

A similitude

One could cite the example of a person who comes from outside and brings a gift for his son as well as gifts for his son's friends and there is no break in the continuity of the process, i.e. whenever he brings a gift for his own son, he also brings gifts for the friends of his son. With the passage of time, the friends may entertain the illusion that the gifts are a matter of their right and they have earned this right by virtue of their own sense of accomplishment. If this happens, and they begin to ignore the actual reason for the arrival of these gifts, the father assembles his son's friends and tells them there is no doubt that I give these gifts to you, but you should keep in mind that I give these gifts to you because you are my son's friends. If you wish the process to continue, then you should keep up this link. If you break the link, and you come to me directly by snapping the link, then this process of receiving gifts will also come to an end.

The point that Allah is making explicit here is that though all help and all assistance emanate from Me, yet the first centre and focus of My help and assistance is My beloved. Therefore, whatever I confer on you, O people, I confer it as the Lord of Muhammad (ﷺ). Therefore, you should keep it in mind that each bounty is bestowed on you from the Lord of Muhammad (ﷺ). If you wish the process to continue, then you should hold firmly on to him, keep in touch with this centre and never snap your link with it. If the link continues, the chain of My bounties will also continue, but the day the link is broken, the chain of bounties will automatically come to a stop. Then you will drift from door to door and roam about aimlessly but your entire struggle will prove futile. So get it into your head that I bestow My bounties on you but I bestow them as the Lord of Muhammad (ﷺ). God is making it clear that though the bounties come from Allah, their centre of distribution is undoubtedly the blessed person of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

All kinds of bounty are fleshed out through the means of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Without his means, they remain hollow as skeletons, mere frames of lifeless bones. O believers, make a note of it that the Lord's bounty is directly related to Prophethood. It is inconceivable without coordination through the Messengership. If you wish the bounty to increase, you should increasingly reinforce the link as the greater the link, the more abundant are the bounties. If you move closer to the Prophet (ﷺ), you move closer to the Lord's bounties, and if you move away from the Prophet (ﷺ), you in fact move away from the

bounties of the Lord. So make the link stronger and stronger to ensure an uninterrupted flow of the bounties.

A close reading of the Qur'anic verse also reveals the subtle point that Allah is forging a direct linkage between His Providence and Prophethood. Here it should be noted that God does not depend on linkages and connections. He is absolutely Independent but, in spite of His independence, He is introducing His Providence through His relationship with Prophethood. The rationale of the divine scheme is that the creatures should have faith in His Providence but this faith, instead of finding a direct expression, should be mediated through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), i.e., they should believe in Him as the Lord of Muhammad (ﷺ) because the only way to seek divine proximity is through the person of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). All other means are inadequate and misleading.

Expression of Providence through Prophethood

At different places in the Holy Qur'an, Allah has expressed His Providence in terms of relationship with Prophethood i.e., He has linked Himself with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). He says:

> *So (O beloved!) By your Lord! These people cannot be Muslims unless they make you judge in every dispute between them.*[1]

1. Qur'an (*an-Nisā'*) 4:65.

Here the Lord is endorsing the authenticity of His own Providence through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). The expression *wa rabbika* (By your Lord!) is deliberately used to stress a subtle point: I am everybody's Lord but the pleasure I draw from being **your Lord** is exceptional; it does not accrue from being the Lord of others. Here Allah is stressing His Own uniqueness as the Creator and also the uniqueness of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) as His creature.

If we cast a glance at the blessings enjoyed by the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), we at once come to realize that all these blessings owed their origin to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). God especially blessed the Companions because they had the closest link with the Prophet (ﷺ). Without this link, they would have led ordinary lives. All these bounties were in fact a visible expression of *min 'atā'i rabbika* (the bounty from your Lord).

Now if we pause to reflect that since fourteen hundred years have passed and the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is no longer among us in manifest form, therefore, can we still receive the same blessings on account of our close association with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ)? Since Allah is Omniscient and nothing is unknown to Him, He knows even before an idea germinates in our consciousness. On account of the perfection and ubiquity of His knowledge He has known all along all the questions human beings might raise. Therefore, He has a pre-packaged answer for us. He is warning the people who lived in the earlier times as well as those who followed them and the others who are living in the present times when the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is no longer among us, and therefore, they may entertain their association with him. Allah's warning applies not only to

the present generations of Muslims but to all the future generations who will populate the earth till the arrival of the Day of Judgement that:

The bounties of your Lord are not closed (to anyone).[1]

As the older generations received the bounties of your Lord, the future generations will also continue to benefit from His favours and this process will last till the Day of Judgement. The past generations deserved their blessings on account of their nexus with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and the future generation will also deserve them on account of a similar association. The rainfall of Allah's bounties on these people is made certain by their bond of love and reverence with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). So Allah's bounties do not depend on the exigencies of time and space. The only precondition for their emergence is our sincere and passionate association with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

Today, if we wish to light up the candle of faith, retrieve the lost taste of belief, reinforce our link with the Creator and attain the blessings of the Lord, the path we should follow has already been chalked out for us, and this is the path of those who were rewarded by Allah because they had a close link with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). If we who live in this world of sham and pretence develop the same association with him, the candle of our faith will continue to burn with an increasingly brighter radiance.

1. Qur'an (*al-Isrā'*) 17:20.

The Qur'anic verse is also unfolding the fact that the centre of faith is our link with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and the bounties of Allah revolve around this centre. It means that our relationship with Allah is based on our relationship with the Prophet (ﷺ). If we wish to strengthen our relationship with God, we should first of all strengthen and shore up our relationship with the Prophet (ﷺ) because this is the only authentic and reliable foundation on which the superstructure of our relationship with God can be adequately raised.

The repetition of the expression '*atā'i rabbika* is not only a reflection of His bounties but also an indication of the factors which have prompted the flow of these bounties. And He is telling the people in categorical terms: listen, O people! There is no doubt that it is my bounty whether it is in the form of the wealth of faith, the wealth of action, the wealth of sincerity or the wealth of close proximity to divine presence but it all flows through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). It means that our access to all the coveted virtues is routed through the Prophet (ﷺ). Therefore, his pleasure is a precondition for the ultimate acceptance of our wishes because divine acknowledgement presupposes the Prophet's acknowledgement.

This verse also posits a direct relationship between divine unity and Messengership. It clearly implies that man's relationship with God is strengthened only when he forges a stronger bond of love and sincerity with the Prophet (ﷺ). It also tends to dissolve the distinction between relationship with Allah and relationship with the Prophet (ﷺ) as both types of relationship intermingle. If a sincere and passionate link is established with the Holy

Prophet (ﷺ), this will automatically ensure a similar link with the ultimate divine authority. This basic link is vital for the true spiritual development of a human being as without it he will remain emotionally drained and spiritually stunted. The way to Allah is in fact the way through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). When this realization dawns on a believer, he experiences the climax of his status as a creature.

There is no doubt that the personage of the Lord and the personage of the Prophet (ﷺ) are poles apart because the Lord is the Creator and the Prophet (ﷺ) is the creature. But the Qur'an has qualified this difference in a highly sophisticated manner. Though the Creator and the creature are two different entities, this difference is merged as far as the issue of the distribution of bounties is concerned; though there is a difference of entity, there is no difference of affinity; though there is a difference of entity, there is no difference of proximity; though there is a difference of entity, there is no difference of loyalty.

2. Forgiveness through the means of the holy Prophet (ﷺ)

Allah has honoured the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) with the highest status among His creatures. Intermediation through his person was valid during his earthly existence and it is equally valid after his death. The two phases of his existence do not modify in any sense the quality of intermediation through him and there is no legal and rational argument that militates against the validity of intermediation through him after his death. When we

consider it valid to beseech divine help through the means of our good deeds, then how can we say that to seek help through the means of the Prophet's person is an invalid act? To consider it invalid is highly perverse because our own good deeds, which we regard as valid, are in fact practical illustrations of the Prophet's sayings. The motivating factor, therefore, is the Prophet (ﷺ) himself. Thus our practice derives from the practice of the Prophet (ﷺ). When intermediation is valid through other persons, how could it be declared invalid through the means of a person who is the chief motivating force behind this practice. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is the most exalted person among all the creatures and it is through him alone that we have received the guidance to do good deeds.

We should not also brush aside the fact that the correct belief does not elevate the intermediaries to the level of Allah's partners. They essentially remain His creatures, and it is in fact a deep realization of their creaturely status that has prompted the Creator to raise them to the superlative degree of excellence among His creatures. Therefore, how can those, who claim to be the humble servants of the Lord, ever aspire to be His partners or rivals? Thus they are neither Allah's partners nor His equals. The deeds serve only as means while Allah is the only authority Who has the exclusive prerogative to either accept or reject the source through which His favour is being solicited. Allah has no rival or partner. He is unique in every respect, both in terms of His personality and the attributes that define His personality. No prophet or saint, dead or alive can be His partner because He Alone has the power to grant or turn down our petitions. Thus in all forms of intermediation, the

intermediary himself acts as a humble servant of the Lord and he relies on the divine mercy as much as the petitioner does. In no sense whatsoever he treats himself as His equal. As a matter of fact, his own status as an intermediary owes to the divine favour. Though He directly receives the prayers and petitions of His creatures and grants them without any means, the presence of means expedite the hope of their acceptance. Therefore, these saintly people are relied upon to implore His help and favour, presuming that Allah responds more sensitively and quickly to prayers through His own favourites and grants these prayers instantaneously and relieves us of our troubles. Allah says:

> *(O beloved!) And if they had come to you, when they had wronged their souls, and asked forgiveness of Allah, and the Messenger also had asked forgiveness for them, they (on the basis of this means and intercession) would have surely found Allah the Granter of repentance, extremely Merciful.*[1]

To restrict the efficacy and operational range of this verse to the earthly existence of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), as some people believe, is to indulge in exegetical misapplication and reflects their unawareness and lack of understanding. Both the exegetes and the traditionists consider intermediation through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) as

1. Qur'an (*an-Nisā'*) 4:64.

a valid act whether it was done through his earthly existence or after his death.

Ibn Kathīr comments on the Qur'anic verse:

(In this Qur'anic verse) Allah is exhorting the sinners and evildoers that when they commit sins and errors they should call on the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and ask forgiveness from Allah. They should also request the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) to pray for them. When they do so, Allah will turn to them and forgive them and He will show mercy to them. That is why He used the words la-wajadullāha tawwāban-rahīmā *(they (on the basis of this means and intercession) would have surely found Allah the Granter of repentance, extremely Merciful). Many have stated this tradition. One of them is Abū Mansūr Sabbāgh who writes in his book* al-Hikāyāt-ul-mashhūrah *that, according to 'Utbī, once he was sitting beside the Prophet's grave when a bedouin came and he said, "Peace be on you, O Allah's Messenger. I have heard that Allah says: '(O beloved!) And if they had come to you, when they had wronged their souls, and asked forgiveness of Allah, and the Messenger also had asked forgiveness for them, they (on the basis of this means and intercession) would have surely found Allah the Granter of repentance, extremely Merciful.' I have come to you, asking forgiveness for my sins and I make you as*

> *my intermediary before my Lord and I have come to you for this purpose." Then he recited these verses: "O, the most exalted among the buried people who improved the worth of the plains and the hillocks! May I sacrifice my life for this grave which is made radiant by you, (the Prophet,) the one who is (an embodiment) of mercy and forgiveness." Then the bedouin went away and I fell asleep. In my dream I saw the Holy Prophet* (ﷺ). *He said to me: O 'Utbī, the bedouin is right, go and give him the good news that Allah has forgiven his sins.*[1]

We come to learn from the words *jā'ūka fastaghfarullāha* of the Qur'anic verse that sinners and wrong-doers should ask forgiveness from Allah through the means of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) while the words *wastaghfara lahum-ur-rasūlu* furnish a proof of his intercession. In *lawajadullāha tawwāban-rahīmā* the proof of intermediation is embedded in a precondition: seek forgiveness through the means of the Messenger (ﷺ) and it is clear when the Messenger (ﷺ) asked forgiveness for his follower, the act of intermediation turned into an act of intercession and through intercession the grant of forgiveness itself becomes a means of forgiveness.

Some people treat means and intercession as two different things. Therefore, it should be noted that when the Prophet (ﷺ) is elevated to the office of intercession, he

1. Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr-ul-Qur'an al-'azīm* (1:519-20).

can claim it as his right while this very act serves as a means in favour of his follower.

The happening of the bedouin has been recorded by the following:

1. Bayhaqī in *Shu'ab-ul-īmān* (3:495-6#4178).
2. Ibn Qudāmah in *al-Mughnī* (3:557).
3. Nawawī in *al-Adhkār* (pp. 92-3).
4. Ibn 'Asākir in *Tahdhīb tārīkh Dimashq al-kabīr* popularly known as *Tārīkh/Tahdhīb Ibn 'Asākir* as quoted by Subkī in *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (pp. 46-7).
5. Ibn Hajar Haythamī in *al-Jawhar-ul-munazzam* (p. 51).

Besides, all scholars of repute have described in their books, in chapters on "visiting the tomb of the Messenger (ﷺ)" or "the rituals of hajj," 'Utbī's tradition that the villager visited the tomb of the Messenger (ﷺ) to ask for forgiveness.

In addition, Imam Qurtubī in his famous exegesis *al-Jāmi' li-ahkām-il-Qur'an* (5:265-6) has related another happening similar to 'Utbī's tradition. He says:

> "Abū Sādiq has reported it from 'Alī. A villager came to see us three days after the burial of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). He placed himself near the Prophet's grave, sprinkled its earth over his body and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, you said and we have heard it from you. You received commands from Allah and we received commands from you, and one of these divine commands is *wa law annahum idh zalamū anfusahum*. It

> is true that I have wronged myself, therefore, you should pray for my forgiveness.' (In response to the villager's act of imploring) he was called out from the grave: 'there is no doubt that you have been forgiven.'"

Faith-boosting review by Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī

Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī has reproduced these two occurrences in his book *Mafāhīm yajib an tusahhah* (pp.157-8) and then offered a sizzling review which is quite relevant to our context. He writes, "This episode has been reproduced by Imam Nawawī in the sixth chapter of his famous book *al-Īdāh*, Abū al-Farj bin Qudāmah in his book *ash-Sharh-ul-kabīr* and Mansūr bin Yūnus al-Buhūtī in his book *Kashshāf-ul-qinā'* which is a popular book in Hambalī school of thought."

Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī expresses in his review an ambivalent attitude towards the tradition as he cannot positively certify its authenticity, but in spite of its lack of certainty, most of the traditionists have relied on its credibility. We may only ask if these heavy weights (traditionists and exegetes) have reproduced disbelief and infidelity, or they have reproduced something that tempts people towards idolatry or worship of the graves? If (may God forbid) this happens, then it would become almost impossible to sort out the genuine books from the spurious ones, leading to unmanageable chaos and confusion.

3. Intermediation through the Prophet's request for forgiveness after his death

The Prophet's statement has quashed all doubts and suspicions and acts as a reassurance to all believers that the Prophet's prayer for forgiveness in favour of his followers is as valid after his death as it was valid before his death. It is a continuous process and will continue to remain in operation till the Day of Judgement.

It is attributed to 'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is reported to have said:

> *My life is blissful for you because you hear traditions from people and relate them to others and my death is also blissful for you because your deeds will be presented to me. If I see the virtues prevail, I will be grateful to Allah, and if I see the vices prevail, I will pray for your forgiveness from Allah.*[1]

---

1. Haythamī transmitted it in *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (9:24) and said that that tradition had been reported by Bazzār (in his *Musnad*) and its sub-narrators are all of *sahīh* (sound) hadith. 'Irāqī has confirmed the soundness of its transmission in his book *Tarh-ut-tathrīb fī sharh-it-taqrīb* (3:297). Ibn Sa'd has recorded it in *at-Tabaqāt-ul-kubrā* (2:194). Qādī 'Iyād has inscribed this tradition in *ash-Shifā* (1:19); and Suyūtī, recording it in *al-Khasā'is-ul-kubrā* (2:281) and *Manāhil-us-sifā fī takhrīj ahādīth ash-Shifā* (p.3), has commented that Ibn Abū Usāmah in his *Musnad* has reproduced it

4. Descension of rain through the Prophet's means

Imam Dārimī relates from Abū al-Jawzā' Aws bin 'Abdullāh:

The people of Medina were in the grip of a severe famine. They complained to 'Ā'ishah (about their terrible condition). She told them to go towards the Prophet's grave and open a window in the direction of the sky so that there is no curtain between the

---

through Bakr bin 'Abdullāh Muzanī and Bazzār in his *Musnad* who have relied on its narration by 'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd with a sound chain of transmission. It has been endorsed by Khafājī and Mullā 'Alī Qārī in their commentaries on *ash-Shifā,* i.e. *Nasīm-ur-riyād* (1:102) and *Sharh ash-Shifā* (1:36) respectively. Hadith-scholar Ibn-ul-Jawzī has reproduced it in *al-Wafā bi-ahwāl-il-mustafā* (2:809-10) from Bakr bin 'Abdullāh and Anas bin Mālik. Subkī has copied this tradition in *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (p.34) from Bakr bin 'Abdullāh Muzanī, and Ibn 'Abd-ul-Hādī in *as-Sārim-ul-munkī* (p.266-7) has authenticated its veracity. Bazzār's tradition has also been recorded by Ibn Kathīr in *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:257). Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī narrated it through Bakr bin 'Abdullāh Muzanī in *al-Matālib-ul-'āliyah* (4:22-3#3853). 'Alā'-ud-Dīn 'Alī copied Ibn Sa'd's tradition in *Kanz-ul-'ummāl* (11:407#31903) and from Hārith (#31904). Nabhānī related it in *Hujjatullāh 'alal-'ālamīn fī mu'jazāt sayyid-il-mursalīn* (p.713).

> *sky and the grave. The narrator says they did so. Then it started raining heavily; even the lush green grass sprang up (everywhere) and the camels had grown so fat (it seemed) they would burst out due to the over piling of blubber. So the year was named as the year of greenery and plenty.*[1]

The famine gripping the people of Medina ended through the mediation of the Prophet's grave. Heavy rains created a spring scenario all around. Men found their food and the animals found their fodder. And the rain that came about as a result of the Prophet's mediation made the lands of Medina greener and more fertile and on account of over-harvesting, they named the year as the year of greenery and plenty.

Those who deny the conceptual relevance of intermediation have raised some objections against this tradition. One of the objections is that its chain of transmission is weak and so it cannot be offered as an argument.

The chain of transmission of this tradition is as follows:

> "Abū an-Nu'mān heard it from Sa'īd bin Zayd, he from 'Amr bin Mālik an-Nukrī and he from Abū al-Jawzā' Aws bin 'Abdullāh who has reported it."

---

1. Dārimī related it in his *Sunan* (1:43#93); Ibn-ul-Jawzī in *al-Wafā' bi-ahwāl-il-mustafā* (2:801); Subkī in *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (p.128); Qastallānī in *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (4:276); and Zurqānī in his *Commentary* (11:150).

Below are given the allegations levelled against these narrators and a rebuttal of these baseless charges:

1. The name of Abū an-Nu'mān 'Ārim was Muhammad bin al-Fadl Sadūsī. They agree that he was a reliable reporter of traditions as is confirmed by Dhahabī in *Mīzān-ul-i'tidāl* (4:7): "He was Imam Bukhārī's teacher, memorizer of traditions and an extremely truthful person." But their objection is that he had lost his marbles in the declining years of his age. Burhān-ud-Dīn Halabī, who possessed great knowledge of traditions, comments in his book *al-Muqaddimah* on this reporter along with others who had lost their memory in the closing years of their lives: "The ruling on these narrators is that the traditions reported by them before their loss of memory are acceptable, while the traditions after their deranged conditions are unacceptable. And if we do not know whether these traditions were received from them before or after their memory lapse, we should not accept these traditions from them either." The objectors say that since we do not know whether Abū an-Nu'mān has narrated this tradition before or after his loss of memory, we cannot adduce the tradition as evidence.

This objection not only lacks significance but also lacks credibility. Their objection is logically inconsistent. While they discard this tradition as weak, because it is the product of his loss of memory, they ignore other traditions though they are also the products of the same state of mind. Dhahabī says: 'Imam

Dāraqutnī comments, "Though he had lost his memory towards the end of his life, he never reported any tradition in this condition that could affect his veracity, therefore, he remains a truthful narrator.' I insist that it is a report by that contemporary memorizer of traditions who is only matched by Imam Nasā'ī." Ibn Hibbān is of the opinion that there are many incompatibilities in Abū an-Nu'mān's narrations after his loss of memory but Dhahabī rejects this opinion by asserting that Ibn Hibbān has failed to produce a single fact that establishes him as a misreporter of traditions. And the real position is the one that has been endorsed by Imam Dāraqutnī.[1]

'Irāqī has admitted in *at-Taqyīd wal-īdāh* that Imam Dhahabī has convincingly rebutted Ibn Hibbān's statement. Dhahabī has explained it in *al-Kāshif* (3:79) that the change took place before death, but after the change he had not related any tradition.

Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī writes in *Taqrīb-ut-tahdhīb* (2:200) that Abū an-Nu'mān was a sound narrator and the change came about in his last years.

Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī writes, "Abū an-Nu'mān's mental debility is neither damaging for him nor does it affect his credibility as a narrator because Imam Bukhārī in his *as-Sahīh* has taken more than one hundred traditions from him and has

1. Dhahabī, *Mīzān-ul-i'tidāl* (4:8).

not taken a single tradition from him after his loss of memory as is stated by Imam Dāraqutnī."[1]

Besides Imam Bukhārī, Imam Ahmad bin Hambal, Ibn Abū Hātim Rāzī and Abū 'Alī Muhammad bin Khālid Zarīqī have also heard traditions from Abū an-Nu'mān before his mental confusion set in.[2]

Imam Dārimī is one of the well-reputed teachers of Imam Bukhārī and other famous memorizers of traditions. Therefore, it was impossible for him to accept any tradition from Abū an-Nu'mān after he had suffered a loss of memory.

2. An objection is raised against Sa'īd bin Zayd Abū al-Hasan Basrī, brother of Hammād bin Zayd, that he is somewhat weak because Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī has written about him in *Taqrīb-ut-tahdhīb* (1:296), "That is, he is extremely truthful but sometimes he commits an error." Dhahabī writes in *Mīzān-ul-i'tidāl* (2:138), "Yahyā bin Sa'īd has called him weak, Sa'dī says that he is not an argument and his traditions are weak and Nasā'ī etc., are of the opinion that he is not sound."

The objections of those, who deny the validity of intermediation, are not only partial as they base them exclusively on these statements and references, but they are also based on p0rejudice as their arguments are not logical because they are tailored to their preconceptions. A detailed

1. Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī, *Shifā'-ul-fu'ād bi-ziyārat khayr-il-'ibād* (p.152).
2. 'Irāqī, *at-Taqyīd wal-īdāh* (p.462).

refutation of their groundless objections is presented as follows:

Dhahabī negates it in *al-Kāshif* (1:286). He says that the decrepitude attributed to Sa'īd bin Zayd is incorrect because Imam Muslim accepted traditions from him and Ibn Ma'īn has called him authentic and trustworthy.

Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī has described it in detail in *Tahdhīb-ut-tahdhīb* (4:32-3):

"Imam Bukhārī said that Muslim bin Ibrāhīm reported to us that Sa'īd bin Zayd Abū al-Hasan is extremely truthful and knows the traditions by heart.[1]

"Dūrī has reported it from Ibn Ma'īn that Sa'īd bin Zayd is a trustworthy narrator.

"Ibn Sa'd has also called him a reliable narrator.[2]

"'Ujlī comments that he belongs to Basrah and he is a dependable relater of traditions.

"Abū Zur'ah said he heard it from Sulaymān bin Harb that Sa'īd bin Zayd is trustworthy.

"Abū Ja'far Dārimī said: Hibbān bin Hilāl reported to us that Sa'īd bin Zayd has related to us that tradition and he is truthful and a preserver of traditions.

"Ibn 'Adī has stated in *al-Kāmil* (3:1212-5) that Sa'īd bin Zayd is truthful and he knows the traditions by heart. He has not related any

1. Bukhārī, *at-Tārīkh-ul-kabīr* (3:472).
2. Ibn Sa'd, *at-Tabaqāt-ul-kubrā* (7:287).

inauthentic tradition except that someone else relates it and to me he happens to be among the (truthful) narrators."

The famous compiler and exegete of traditions 'Abdullāh bin Muhammad bin Siddīq al-Ghumārī from Morocco writes in his book *Irghām-ul-mubtadī al-ghabī bi-jawāz-it-tawassul bi an-nabī* writes: "Imam Ahmad bin Hambal has referred to Sa'īd bin Zayd as *laysa bihī ba's*. It means that there is no objection against him and he is absolutely truthful.[1] Imam Ahmad's expression is semantically identical with trustworthiness, which is considered the highest virtue by all traditionists of integrity.

Ibn Ma'īn also identifies the term *laysa bihī ba's* with trustworthiness.[2]

The traditionist Ibn-us-Salāh in *al-Muqaddimah*, Sakhāwī in *Fath-ul-mughīth*, Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī in *Hady-us-sārī muqaddimah Fath-ul-bārī* and Nawawī in *at-Taqrīb wat-taysīr* have identified *laysa bihī ba's* with veracity. Besides, a number of traditionists of the third century (AH), for instance, Ibn Ma'īn, Ibn Madīnī, Abū Zur'ah, Ibn Abū Hātim Rāzī, Ya'qūb bin Sufyān Fasāwī, etc., have invested *laysa bihī ba's* with the distinction of veracity.

3. Ibn Hibbān has called 'Amr bin Mālik an-Nukrī as veracious as Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī writes in *Tahdhīb-*

---

1. Imam Ahmad's statement has been reproduced by Dhahabī in *Mīzān-ul-i'tidāl* (2:138) and by Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī in *Tahdhīb-ut-tahdhīb* (4:32).
2. Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *Lisān-ul-Mīzān* (1:13).

ut-tahdhīb (8:96), "Ibn Hibbān has mentioned him in his book *Kitāb-ut-thiqāt*. Therefore, Ibn Hibbān's acknowledgement of his credibility is based on truth and it is beyond any iota of doubt that Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, on the basis of his authenticity, has called 'Amr bin Mālik an-Nukrī in *Taqrīb-ut-tahdhīb* (2:77), "*Sadūq lahū awhām* (he is truthful but there are doubts about him)."

The word *sadūq* (truthful) used by Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī attests to the veracity of 'Amr bin Mālik an-Nukrī and he has given it precedence over others. Mahmūd Sa'īd Mamdūh refers to it in his book *Raf'-ul-minārah* (p.258) that 'Abdullāh bin Ahmad, attributing it to his father, commented, "*Annahū ka-annahū da''afahū* (as if he weakened him)." I say that the word *ka-anna* (as if; as though) is doubt and suspicion; it cannot serve as an act of justification.

When 'Abdullāh bin 'Alī bin Madīnī referred to Hasan bin Mūsā Ashyab as *wa ka-annahū da''afahū* (and as if he weakened him), Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī endorsed him by saying: *hādhā zann, la taqūmu bihī hujjah* (it is suspicion, therefore, it cannot serve as a justification).[1]

So this statement makes the veracity of 'Amr bin Mālik an-Nukrī unquestionable. Dhahabī has explained it further in *Mīzān-ul-i'tidāl* (3:286) and *al-Mughnī* (2:488). Mahmūd Sa'īd Mamdūh writes:

1. Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *Hady-us-sārī muqaddimah Fath-ul-bārī* (p.397).

"Ibn 'Adī has bracketed 'Amr bin Mālik an-Nukrī with 'Amr bin Mālik Rāsibī in *al-Kāmil* (5:1799) and has dubbed him as a recanter narrator. Dhahabī has explained it in *Mīzān-ul-i'tidāl* (3:285) and *al-Mughnī* (2:488) while Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī has commented on it in *Tahdhīb-ut-tahdhīb* (8:95). Both these hadith-scholars have delinked 'Amr bin Mālik an-Nukrī from 'Amr bin Mālik Rāsibī and disproved the linkage forged by Ibn 'Adī, which has driven some of the traditionists to label 'Amr bin Mālik an-Nukrī as unreliable. These traditionists are not to blame as they have based their deductions on the conclusions drawn by Ibn 'Adī without any conscious attempt at distortion as has been explained by Ibn-ul-Jawzī in *Kitāb-ul-mawdū'āt* (2:145) and by Ibn Taymiyyah in *Qā'idah jalīlah fit-tawassul wal-wasīlah*."[1]

Albānī writes in *Ta'līq 'alā Fadl-is-salāt 'ala an-nabī* (p.88): 'Amr bin Mālik an-Nukrī is a reliable narrator as has been endorsed by Dhahabī. He has also confirmed this view in another book *Silsilat-ul-ahādīth-is-sahīhah* (5:608).

4. A large number of people have taken over traditions from Abū al-Jawzā' Aws bin 'Abdullāh on the basis of his credibility and the direct transmission of this tradition from 'Ā'ishah has also been established. In support of this contention it suffices to state that Imam Muslim has recorded Abū al-Jawzā' Aws's narration through 'Ā'ishah. Imam Bukhārī says:

---

1. Mahmūd Sa'īd Mamdūh, *Raf'-ul-minārah* (pp.259-60).

It was related to us by Musaddad who had heard it from Ja‘far bin Sulaymān, who from ‘Amr bin Mālik an-Nukrī who had reported it from Abū al-Jawzā’. He said: I spent twelve years with Ibn ‘Abbās and ‘Ā’ishah and there was not a single verse of the Holy Qur'an about which I had not asked them.[1]

Ibn S‘ad has related another tradition on these lines:

Abū al-Jawzā’ has related: I lived as Ibn ‘Abbās's neighbour for twelve years and there was not a single verse of the Holy Qur'an about which I had not asked him.[2]

Abu Na‘aym has added the following words to the tradition:

1. Bukhārī, *at-Tārīkh-ul-kabīr* (2:16-7).
2. Ibn S‘ad, *at-Tabaqāt-ul-kubrā* (7:224).

> *And my deputy visited the Mother of the Believers ('Ā'ishah) every morning and evening. So I did not hear from any other quarter (except what I heard from her), nor did I hear from any other source (except from her) what Allah has enjoined about sin that I shall forgive him (the sinner) except the one who associates any partner with Me.*[1]

According to Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, it by no means implies that he never met 'Ā'ishāh afterwards. So, the inference drawn by Imam Muslim from the frequency of visits clearly indicates that he had a face-to-face meeting with 'Ā'ishah.

Thus when his meeting with 'Ā'ishah has been established with irrefutable finality, the element of deceit and incredibility in his statement is automatically washed out and his tradition, therefore, acquires authenticity. To call him an impostor is, actually, to commit excess against his genuineness as a reporter, and to do him justice we have to acknowledge the obvious fact that his statement is based on sound transmission. This conclusion is compatible not only with the findings of Imam Muslim but also reflects the general drift of public opinion.

---

1. Abū Na'aym, *Hilyat-ul-awliyā' wa tabaqāt-ul-asfiyā'* (3:79).

Abū Nu'aym has confirmed the authenticity of a number of traditions by Abū al-Jawzā' with the words *'an 'Ā'ishah* (from 'Ā'ishah) in *Hilyat-ul-awliyā' wa tabaqāt-ul-asfiyā'*.

Ibn-ul-Qaysarānī has also reported a tradition from Abū al-Jawzā' by using the words *sami'a 'Ā'ishah* (he listened to 'Ā'ishah).[1]

This detailed discussion proves beyond doubt that these certificates of authenticity are not based on any forgery but on verifiable evidence, and this chain of transmission is *sahīh* (sound) or *hasan* (fair).

Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī says, "This tradition has a good chain of transmission; rather, in my opinion, it is sound. The scholars have also acknowledged its soundness and have established its genuineness on the basis of almost equally credible evidence.[2]

Therefore, this tradition may be relied upon as a viable argument because, according to Imam Nasā'ī's contention, a narrator may be discarded only when all the traditionists have unanimously rejected him/her.[3]

Those who deny the relevance of intermediation object to the tradition as undependable as its range of reference is limited only to the Companion and does not extend up to the Prophet (ﷺ) himself. In their opinion, it is only one of 'Ā'ishah's statements and not a command to be indiscriminately followed.

---

1. Ibn-ul-Qaysarānī, *al-Jam' bayn as-Sahīhayn* (1:46) as quoted by Mahmūd Sa'īd Mamdūh in *Raf'-ul-minārah* (p.261).
2. Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī, *Shifā'-ul-fu'ād bi-ziyārat khayr--il-'ibād* (p.153).
3. Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *Nuzhat-un-nazr bi-sharh nukhbat-ul-fikr fī mustalah hadith ahl-ul-athr* (p.89).

They add that, even if it carries the stamp of her certification, it cannot serve as cogent argument as it is based on personal opinion, which is generally characterized by fluctuation. Sometimes the personal opinion of a Companion may prove correct but at other occasions it may prove incorrect. Therefore, its application is not binding on the believers.

A simple answer to this baseless objection is that not only the tradition is properly certified, but no Companion has ever raised any objection against the mode of action prescribed by 'Ā'ishah, nor has such an objection been ever reported, just as no objection has been raised against the person in the tradition reported by Mālik ad-Dār who prays for rain at the grave of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).[1] These traditions reflect the collective opinion of the Companions and such a consensus is quite valid. An act, which enjoys the tacit support of the Companions, cannot be spelled out as invalid or a discredited form of innovation, and it is obligatory for us to follow the Companions. In this context, Imam Shāf'ī says, "For us, their opinion about us is far more authentic than our own opinion."[2]

This tradition clearly establishes the fact that 'Ā'ishah commanded the natives of Medina to rely on the Prophet (ﷺ) in his grave as a source of intermediation for divine blessings.

1. This tradition will be discussed later.
2. Ibn-ul-Qayyim, *A'lām-ul-muwaqqi'īn 'an rabb-il-'ālamīn* (2:186).

Ibn Taymiyyah has discarded the tradition as mere fabrication. According to him, during the entire life of 'Ā'ishah, there was no such hole in the roof of the Prophet's tomb. But this objection is weak as watered tea because Imam Dārimī and the religious leaders and scholars who followed him were more deeply aware of these details. For example, a traditionist and historian from Medina, 'Alī bin Ahmad Samhūdī has disconfirmed Ibn Taymiyyah and supported Imam Dārimī's contention. According to him, Zayn-al-Mirāghī said, "Let it be known that it is a practice of the people of Medina to date that, during a period of drought, they open a window at the bottom of the dome in the Prophet's tomb in the direction of prayer niche though the roof intervenes between the grave and the sky. I say that in our period, too, one of the gates in the boundary wall, enveloping the tomb, called *al-mawājahah*, that is, the door that opens towards the Prophet's face, is flung open and people gather there (for prayer).[1]

The Ottoman Turks followed the practice of offering prayers through the mediation of the Prophet's grave. The practice remained in vogue till the early years of the twentieth century. Whenever there was famine and scarcity of rain, the residents of Medina persuaded a six-or-seven-year-old child to climb the roof of the grave. (He performed the ablution before climbing over the roof.) The child tugged at the rope, which had been hung down the roof to

1. Samhūdī, *Wafā'-ul-wafā* (2:560).

close the hole in the grave, dug at the suggestion of the Mother of the Believers, 'Ā'ishah. When there was no curtain between the sky and the grave, it started raining.

5. Intermediation through the Prophet's grave during 'Umar's tenure

Mālik ad-Dār has related:

> *The people were gripped by famine during the tenure of 'Umar (bin al-Khattāb). Then a Companion walked up to the Prophet's grave and said, "O Messenger of Allah, please ask for rain from Allah for your Community who is in dire straits." Then the Companion saw the Prophet (ﷺ) in a dream. The Prophet (ﷺ) said to him, "Go over to 'Umar, give him my regards and tell him that the rain will come to you. And tell 'Umar that he should be on his toes, he should be on his toes, (he should remain alert)." Then the Companion went over to see 'Umar and passed on to him the tidings.*

> *On hearing this, 'Umar broke into a spurt of crying. He said, "O Allah, I exert myself to the full until I am completely exhausted."*[1]

Ibn Taymiyyah has endorsed its authenticity in his book *Iqtidā'-us-sirāt-il-mustaqīm mukhālifat ashāb-il-jahīm* (p.373). Ibn Kathīr has confirmed the soundness of its transmission in *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (5:167). Ibn Abū Khaythamah narrated it with the same chain of transmission as quoted by Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī in *al-Isābah fī tamyīz-is-sahābah* (3:484), while the latter writes in *Fath-ul-bārī* (2:495-6): "Ibn Abū Shaybah transmitted it with a sound chain of transmission and Sayf bin 'Umar Tamīmī has recorded it in *al-Futūh-ul-kabīr* that the dreamer was a Companion known as Bilāl bin Hārith Muzanī." Qastallānī has remarked in *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (4:276) that Ibn Abū Shaybah has narrated it with a sound chain of transmission while Zurqānī has supported Qastallānī in his *Commentary* (11:150-1).

It is quite surprising that some people have tried to dub even this soundly transmitted tradition as weak and, therefore, lacking the sinews to face a rigorously probing analysis, though this is far from the truth. They have marshalled in their favour the following objections:

First objection: One of its narrators is A'mash who is a double-crossing impostor (*mudallis*).

---

1. Related by Ibn Abū Shaybah in *al-Musannaf* (12:31-2#12051); Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (7:47); Ibn 'Abd-ul-Barr, *al-Istī'āb fī ma'rifat-il-ashāb* (2:464); Subkī, *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (p.130); 'Alā'-ud-Dīn 'Alī, *Kanz-ul-'ummāl* (8:431#23535); and Abū Ya'lā Khalīl bin 'Abdullāh Khalīlī Qazwīnī in *Kitāb-ul-irshād fī ma'rifat 'ulamā'-il-hadith* (1:313-4), as quoted by Mahmūd Sa'īd Mamdūh in *Raf'-ul-minārah* (p.262).

Reply: Though A‘mash is an impostor, his tradition is popular for two reasons whether its soundness is proved or not:

1. A‘mash is regarded as a second-grade impostor, and this is a class of impostors from whom our religious leaders recorded traditions in their authentic books. Therefore, it is proved that this tradition narrated by A‘mash is accepted.

2. If we accept this tradition only on the basis of its transmission by A‘mash, as is the practice in the case of third-grade or even lower-grade impostors, even then the tradition by A‘mash is likely to retain its popularity as he has copied it from Abū Sālih Dhakawān Sammān. Imam Dhahabī comments: "When A‘mash begins a tradition with the word *‘an* (from) there is a possibility of imposture and deception. But if he relates it from his elders like Ibrāhīm, Ibn Abū Wā'il, Abū Sālih Sammān, etc., then it is presumed to possess sound linkage (*ittisāl*).[1]

In addition, Imam Dhahabī has also described him as trustworthy (*thiqah*).

Second objection: Albānī in his book *at-Tawassul, ahkāmuhū wa anwa‘uhū* observes, "I do not acknowledge it authentic because the credibility and memory of Mālik ad-Dār is not known and these are the two basic criteria for any authentic narrator of traditions. Ibn Abū Hātim Rāzī in *Kitāb-ul-jarh wat-ta‘dīl* [4/1/213(8:213)], while discussing Mālik

1. Dhahabī, *Mīzān-ul-i‘tidāl* (2:224).

ad-Dār, has not mentioned any narrator except Abū Sālih who has accepted any tradition from him, which shows that he is unknown. It is also supported by the fact that Ibn Abū Hātim Rāzī, who himself is a leading figure of Islam and a memorizer of traditions, has not mentioned anyone of them who has pronounced him trustworthy (*thiqah*). Similarly Mundhirī has remarked that he does not know him while Haythamī in his *Majma'-uz-zawā'id*, has supported his observation…"

Reply: This objection is refuted by the biographical details which Ibn Sa'd has furnished while discussing him among the second-grade Medinan Successors: "Mālik ad-Dār was a slave freed by 'Umar bin al-Khattāb. He reported traditions from Abū Bakr as-Siddīq and 'Umar, and Abū Sālih Sammān reported traditions from him. He was known."[1]

In addition, this objection is also cancelled by Khalīlī's (d.446 AH) comment on Māik ad-Dār: "Mālik ad-Dār's trustworthiness and reliability is generally accepted and the group of Successors has eulogized him."[2]

Besides, the biographical sketch provided by Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī also serves to neutralize this objection:

---

1. Ibn Sā'd, *at-Tabaqāt-ul-kubrā* (5:12).
2. Abū Yā'lā Khalīl bin 'Abdullāh Khalīlī Qazwīnī, *Kitāb-ul-irshād fī ma'rifat 'ulamā'-il-hadith*, as quoted by 'Abdullāh bin Muhammad bin Siddīq al-Ghumārī in *Irghām-ul-mubtadī al-ghabī bi-jawāz-it-tawassul bi an-nabī* (p.9).

"Mālik bin 'Iyād, a slave freed by 'Umar, was known as Mālik ad-Dār. He had seen the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and heard traditions from Abū Bakr. He has taken traditions from Abū Bakr as-Siddīq 'Umar Fārūq , Mu'ādh and Abū 'Ubaydah, and Abū Sammān and the two sons of this (Mālik ad-Dār) 'Awn and 'Abdullāh have taken traditions from him.

"And Imam Bukhārī in *at-Tārīkh-ul-kabīr,* (7:304-5), through reference to Abū Sālih, has acknowledged a tradition from him that 'Umar is reported to have said during the period of famine: I do not shirk responsibility but I may be made more humble.

Ibn Abū Khaythamah has reproduced a long tradition along with these words (which we are discussing), ... and I have copied a tradition narrated by 'Abd-ur-Rahmān bin Sa'īd bin Yarbū' Makhzūmī with reference to Mālik ad-Dār, in *Fawā'id Dāwūd bin 'Umar* and *ad-Dabī* compiled by Baghawī. He said that one day 'Umar called me. He had a gold wallet in his hand, which had four hundred dinars in it. He commanded me to take it to Abū 'Ubaydah, and then he narrated the remaining part of the happening.

Ibn Sa'd has placed Mālik ad-Dār in the first group of Successors among the natives of Medina and has averred that he has taken traditions from Abū Bakr as-Siddīq and 'Umar, and he was known. Abū 'Ubaydah has asserted that 'Umar had appointed him the guardian of his family. When

'Uthmān was elevated to the office of the caliph, he appointed him as the minister of finance, and that is how he came to be known as Mālik ad-Dār (the master of the house).

"Ismā'īl Qādī has reported it from 'Alī bin Madīnī that Mālik ad-Dār was the treasurer of 'Umar."[1]

Ibn Hibbān has attested to the trustworthiness and credibility of Mālik ad-Dār in *Kitāb-uth-thiqāt* (5:384).[2]

Now if Mundhirī and Haythamī insist that they do not know Mālik ad-Dār, it means that they have not asserted anything about his credibility or lack of credibility. However there are traditionists of great repute like Imam Bukhārī, Ibn Sa'd, 'Alī bin Madīnī, Ibn Hibbān and Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī who know him. Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī has even mentioned him in *Tahdhīb-ut-tahdhīb* (7:226; 8:217).

It is shocking to learn that Albānī gives weight to the opinion of those who do not know Mālik ad-Dār and prefers them to those who know him. Albānī has discarded the traditions of Mālik bin 'Iyād who is popularly known by the title "ad-Dār" while the great Companions appointed him as their minister because they relied on his trustworthiness. He was even given the portfolio of finance minister, an office that requires honesty, integrity and a huge sense of responsibility. On the contrary, Albānī

1. Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *al-Isābah fī tamyīz-is-sahābah* (3:484-5).
2. Mahmūd Sa'īd Mamdūh, *Raf'-ul-minārah* (p.266). Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī also mentioned in his *Tahdhīb-ut-tahdhīb* (7:226; 8:217).

gives credence to the traditions of those who enjoyed a much lower status than Mālik ad-Dār. The following examples support my contention:

1. He has pronounced Yahyā bin 'Uryān Harawī as *hasan* (fair) in *Silsīlat-ul-ahādīth-is-sahīhah* (1:49). His argument is based on the statement made by Khatīb Baghdādī in *Tārīkh Baghdad* (14:161) in which he declares Yahyā bin 'Uryān Harawī as a traditionist of Baghdad.

This statement is quite transparent. Khatīb Baghdādī has argued neither in favour of nor against Yahyā bin 'Uryān Harawī. His stance is neutral, as he has not tried to establish the stature of his narrations. He has not labelled them as authentic or inauthentic. In spite of his posture of neutrality, it is quite surprising that Albānī has called him fair (*hasan*).

2. Abū Sa'īd Ghifārī has also been pronounced a fair narrator in *Silsilat-ul-ahādīth-is-sahīhah* (2:298). After stating that he is no longer unknown because two narrators have acknowledged traditions from him, he writes, "So he is a Successor. A group of those who have committed the traditions to memory have verified the authenticity of his traditions. Therefore, 'Irāqī has declared the traditions attributed to him as authentic (*isnāduhū jayyid*), and there is no harm in it. This gave me a sense of satisfaction and I felt deeply contented."

The question is why has he tried to discriminate between Abū Sa'īd Ghifārī and Mālik ad-Dār?

3. Sālih bin Khawwāt has also been pronounced credible in *Silsilat-ul-ahādīth-is-sahīhah* (2:436) because a group of people has relied on his traditions, and Ibn Hibbān has mentioned him in *Kitāb-uth-thiqāt*.

While, according to our research, Ibn Hajar ‘Asqalānī has described him as an acceptable narrator in *Taqrīb-ut-tahdhīb* (1:359) and has also stated that he belonged to the eighth category of Successors. If an eighth-grade narrator is being described as credible, what justification is there to pronounce a first-grade Successor as incredible? The discrimination seems to be rooted more in prejudice than reason.

Therefore, the silence of Ibn Abū Hātim Rāzī is hardly an argument against the unknown stature of Mālik ad-Dār because his silence is based on lack of evidence about the narrator. Thus the absence of evidence and reasoning does not reflect the unknowingness of the narrator, which his silence neither explains nor indicates towards any definite interpretation. On the contrary, it opposes any attempt to establish the unknowingness of the narrator. There are a number of narrators about whom Ibn Abū Hātim Rāzī has remained silent though other scholars have argued about them and the books on tradition and related issues are riddled with similar examples.

Third objection: There is a suspicion of discontinuance between Abū Sālih Dhakawān Sammān and Mālik ad-Dār.

Reply: This suspicion is a fallacy, as it has no basis in reality. In its rejection, it is sufficient to say that Abū Sālih like Mālik ad-Dār was a native of Medina and he has reported traditions from the Companions. Therefore, he is not an impostor and a fraud. It may also be noted that only contemporaneity is an adequate guarantee for the connection of transmission as Imam Muslim has mentioned the consensus in the Preamble (*muqaddimah*) of his *as-Sahīh*.

Fourth objection: There is no justification for the soundness of this tradition because it entirely depends upon a person whose name has not been spelled out. Only in the tradition narrated by Sayf bin 'Umar Tamīmī, he has been named Bilāl and Sayf has declared him as a weak narrator.

Reply: This objection is also groundless, because justification does not depend on Bilāl but on 'Umar bin al-Khattāb's act. He did not prevent Bilāl from performing his act; on the contrary, he acknowledged it. He rather himself cried and said: 'my Creator, I do not shirk responsibility but I may be made more humble.' Therefore the person visiting the grave, whether he is a Companion or a Successor, does not affect the soundness of the tradition.

The gist of the discussion is that the tradition related by Mālik ad-Dār is sound, as I have stated in the earlier part of my exposition. Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī writes:

> "All those people who have made reference to this tradition or narrated it or

> reproduced it in their books have never labelled it disbelief or infidelity. They have not questioned the substance of the tradition and it has been mentioned by a scholarly person of high level like Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī who has confirmed it as a soundly transmitted tradition. Therefore his confirmation needs no apology in view of his highly distinguished stature among the hadith-scholars."[1]

This tradition establishes the following principles:

1. Visiting graves with the intention of mediation and seeking help.
2. It is valid to visit the grave of a pious dead person during the period of one's trials and tribulations to seek help from him because if this act were invalid, 'Umar would surely have forbidden that person to do so.
3. The Prophet's appearance in the dream of the person who visited his grave and to give him good tidings, argues in favour of the fact that it is quite valid to seek help from non-Allah and the dead because if it were invalid, it would have been impossible for the Prophet (ﷺ) not to have forbidden that person to do so.
4. Validation of the mode of address "O Messenger of Allah (*yā rasūl Allah*)" even after his death.

---

1. Muhammad bin 'Alawī al-Mālikī, *Mafāhīm yajib an tusahhah* (p.151).

5. Call for help and the act of intermediation dates back to the early ages.
6. The holy personality of the Prophet (ﷺ) is a fountain of guidance even after his death.
7. The head of the state is responsible for administrative matters. The Holy Prophet(ﷺ), in spite of being the chief of prophets, did not break the state channel and, as a visible demonstration of his sense of discipline, he commanded the man visiting his grave to see the head of the state.
8. The man visiting the grave implored his help through the instrumentality of the Ummah. This shows the Prophet's immeasurable love for the Community of his followers.
9. Justification for making the Ummah as a source for seeking his help.
10. Justification for making non-prophet a means of help in the presence of the Prophet (ﷺ).
11. Anyone who strengthens his link with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is rewarded by his sight and is showered with his blessings.
12. The Holy Prophet(ﷺ), even after his death, is aware of the weakness of his Ummah or anyone of its rulers and he issues different commands for removing these flaws.
13. To seek guidance from Allah's favourites.
14. The acknowledgement of the Prophet's commands by the Companions after his death as just and truthful.
15. Imposition of commands received in dreams on others.

16. When intermediation was discussed in the presence of ‘Umar bin al-Khattāb, he did not forbid it; rather he cried and responded to it acknowledging it as valid.
17. ‘Umar bin al-Khattāb’s love for the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) that he incessantly cried as someone mentioned the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

6. Fulfilment of needs through the Prophet’s mediation

In the first and second section we have established through sound traditions that the believers relied on the Prophet (ﷺ) as a means both before his birth and during his earthly life. The famous tradition narrated by ‘Uthmān bin Hunayf with reference to the Prophet’s life was discussed in detail in which a blind man submitted his petition to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and his eyesight was restored through his mediation. Now we would like to explain that this mode of intermediation was not confined to his life on earth alone, but the Companions relied on it even after his death. It is clear from Tabarānī’s tradition that a person used to visit ‘Uthmān bin ‘Affān on a personal errand. ‘Uthmān bin ‘Affān not only was indifferent to him but also turned a deaf ear to his need. That person met ‘Uthmān bin Hunayf and lodged his complaint against it. ‘Uthmān bin Hunayf said to him: fetch an earthen pot and perform the ablution, then go to the mosque and offer two cycles of prayer and say:

> *O Allah, I beseech you and submit myself to you through the mediation of our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), a merciful Prophet. O Muhammad! I submit to my Lord through your means so that He should fulfil my need.*

And then mention your need. The man went away and he did as he was told to do. Later when he arrived at ‘Uthmān bin ‘Affān’s door, the porter caught him by his hand and took him to ‘Uthmān bin ‘Affān who made him sit beside him on the mat and asked him: what is your need? He mentioned the need and the caliph fulfilled his need and said to him: why haven’t you mentioned your need so far? He told him further: do come to me whenever you have a problem? When the man left his place, he met ‘Uthmān bin Hunayf and said to him: May God bless you! He neither gave any thought to my need nor turned his attention to me until you recommended me to him. ‘Uthmān bin Hunayf replied:

> *By God! I did not say this, but once I was in the company of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) that a blind man came over to see him and complained to him about the loss of his eyesight. The Prophet (ﷺ) asked him to be patient, but he said: O Messenger of Allah! I don't have any servant and I am in great trouble. The Prophet(ﷺ) said: 'fetch an earthen pot and perform the ablution, then offer two cycles of prayer and implore Allah with these praying words.' Then 'Uthmān bin Hunayf said: 'By God! We had neither gone out far away from the meeting nor had the conversation among us stretched out that the man came running to us as if he had never been blind.*[1]

That is, 'Uthmān bin Hunayf taught him the prayer that had been used as the source of the Prophet's help and succour after his death. The point to be noted is that the person was under the illusion that his need had been fulfilled on account of 'Uthmān bin Hunayf's recommendation to the caliph. So 'Uthmān bin Hunayf instantly shed his illusion and related to him the tradition he had heard from the Prophet (ﷺ) and had himself put to

1. Related by Tabarānī in *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (9:31#8311) and *al-Mu'jam-us-saghīr* (1:183-4); Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (6:167-8); Mundhirī, *at-Targhīb wat-tarhīb* (1:474-6); Subkī, *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (p.125); Haythamī, *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (2:279); and Suyūtī in *al-Khasā'is-ul-kubrā* (2:201-2). Mundhirī graded it *sahīh* (sound).

test to prove that his need was fulfilled because he had relied on the means of the Prophet (ﷺ) by calling on him and seeking his help. He swore by God and convinced him that he had not recommended him to the caliph but it had all happened through the blessing of the Prophet's mediation.

Ibn Taymiyyah's endorsement

Ibn Taymiyyah has related a story in the perspective of this tradition that Ibn Abū Dunyā has narrated a tradition in his book *Mujābī ad-du'ā'* that a person came over to see 'Abd-ul-Malik bin Sa'īd bin Abjar. 'Abd-ul-Malik pressed his belly and told him that he was suffering from an incurable discase. The man asked him: what is it? 'Abd-ul-Malik replied that it was a kind of ulcer that grows inside the belly and ultimately kills the man. It is said that the patient turned round and then he said:

> *Allah! Allah! Allah is my Lord. I regard no one as His rival or partner. O Allah! I beseech You and submit myself to You through the mediation of Your Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), the merciful Prophet. O Muhammad! Through your means I submit myself to your and my Lord that He should take mercy on me in my state of illness.*

It is said that ‘Abd-ul-Malik pressed his belly again and said: you are cured, you are no longer suffering from any disease. Ibn Taymiyyah after recording the whole incident in his book, comments:

> *I say that this and other forms of supplication have been taken over from our predecessors.*[1]

The noteworthy point is that Ibn Taymiyyah has also endorsed it that (1) it is an act of our predecessors, and (2) it is quite valid to recover from disease through this act.

Proof of ritualistic assignment

The two traditions also make it clear that the practice of ritualistic assignment by the saintly people to others is a valid act because this has been the practice of Allah’s favourites in the past. The Prophet (ﷺ) had not asked ‘Uthmān bin Hunayf, though, to pass it to other people.

7. Intermediation through the Prophet (ﷺ) on the Day of Judgement

Even on the Day of Judgement the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) will act as a means of forgiveness for the believers. The Qur'an states:

1. Ibn Taymiyyah, *Qā‘idah jalīlah fit-tawassul wal-wasīlah* (p.91).

> *O our Lord! Bless us with all that you have promised us through your messengers and do not humiliate us on the Day of Judgement. Surely You do not go back on Your Word.*[1]

In the light of these verses, the divine promise made to all the prophets is here acting as a source of intermediation. All the rewards promised to other prophets carry special significance for the followers of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) through his means. On the Day of Judgement, grilled by the unbearable heat, the entire mankind will rally round the prophets but each prophet will tell them to move on to some other prophet until the whole mankind will rally round the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). The following is an agreed upon tradition:

1. Qur'an (*Āl-i-'Imrān*) 3:194.

The Holy Prophet(ﷺ) said: 'when it is the Day of Judgement, people, out of nervousness, will call on one another. First of all, they will call on Adam (عليه السلام) and request him to intercede on their behalf before Allah but he will turn down their request by saying that today it is beyond his power to help them out and he will advise them to call on Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) because he is the Friend of Allah. So people will call on Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) who will also excuse himself by saying that he is not in position to help them, therefore they should go to Mūsā (عليه السلام) because he is Allah,s interlocutor. They will go to Mūsā (عليه السلام) and he will also express his inability to help them and advise them to see 'Īsā (عليه السلام) because he is the soul created by Allah and His word. They will go to 'Īsā (عليه السلام) and he will also tell them that he is not able to help them. Therefore, they should go to Muhammad (ﷺ) (because he is the beloved of God). So all human beings will rally round me and I will tell them that yes (today) I hold the office of intercession. I will seek permission from my Lord and I will be granted the permission. Then He will inspire me to praise and glorify Him with such praises, which I cannot describe at this time. (In short,) I will praise and glorify Allah with those praises and prostrate myself before Him. Then I will be told: 'O

Muhammad, raise your radiant head, speak and you will be heard, demand and you will be blessed with it, and intercede (on behalf of your people), your intercession will be granted.' So I will implore: 'O Lord! My Ummah, my Ummah!' God shall command: 'go and take them out of the Hell, whosoever is left with faith even as small as the grain of barley.' So I will go and do so (I will take all such people out of Hell). Then I will return and praise and glorify Him with those praises and I will prostrate myself before Him. So I will be commanded: 'O Muhammad, raise your radiant head, speak and you will be heard, beg and you will be blessed with it, intercede (on behalf of your people) and your intercession will be granted.' I will implore: 'O Lord, my Ummah! My Ummah!' I will be commanded: 'go and take them out of Hell too, whosoever is left with faith even as small as the tiny grain of rye.' So I will go and do so. Then I will return and praise and glorify Him with the same praises and I will again prostrate myself before Him. So I will be commanded: 'O Muhammad, raise your radiant head, speak and you will be heard, beg and you will be blessed with it and intercede (on behalf of your people), your intercession will be granted.' I will implore: 'O Lord, my Ummah! My Ummah!' I will be

commanded: 'go and take them out of Hell whosoever is left with the tiniest faith, even smaller than a grain of rye.' Such a person will also be taken out of Hell. Accordingly I will go and do so (I will take them out of Hell). (Hasan has added a few more words to the tradition narrated by Anas. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:) 'I will return the fourth time, and I will praise and glorify the Lord in the same way, then I will prostrate myself before Him, so I will be commanded: 'raise your radiant head, and speak, you will be heard, beg and you will be blessed with it, and intercede (on behalf of your people), your intercession will be granted.' At that time I will implore the Lord that I should be allowed to take out a person from Hell who has recited lā ilāha illallāhu *(there is no deity except Allah) even once in his life (from the core of his heart). The Lord will reply, I swear by My honour, glory, greatness and supremity that I will liberate a person from the fire of Hell who has even once recited* lā ilāha illallāhu *(there is no deity except Allah).*[1]

---

1. Related through different narrators by Bukhārī in his *as-Sahīh*, b.of *tawhīd* (Islamic monotheism) ch.36 (6:2727-8#7072), b. of *īmān* (faith) ch.32 (1:24-5#44), b. of *ambiyā*' (prophets) ch.5,12 (3:1215-6, 1226#3162,3182), b. of *tafsīr* (interpretation of the Qur'an) ch.3,203 (4:1624-5, 1745-7 # 4206, 4435), b. of *riqāq* (softening of hearts) ch.51(5:2401# 6197), b. of *tawhīd*, ch.19,24,37 (6:2695-6, 2708-9, 2730#6975,7002, 7078). Muslim,

This tradition has proved, without any particle of doubt, that on the Day of Resurrection the process of judgement and accountability will be initiated through the mediation of the Prophet's prayer, praise and glorification of the Lord. And on account of the Prophet's mediation, the process of accountability will start with his Ummah so that they do not have to stay longer than necessary in the scorching heat of the Day of Resurrection. The Qur'an has also explained in the context of the Day of Judgement:

> *(It will be the day) when Allah will disgrace neither His Prophet nor the people who embraced faith along with him. (On that day) their light (of faith) will keep sprinting ahead of them and on their right side.*[1]

The Qur'anic verse spells out in unmistakable terms that Allah will not humiliate the followers of the Last Prophet

---

as-Sahīh, b. of *īmān* (faith) ch.84 (1:182-4# 193); Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *sifat-ul-qiyāmah* (signs of Doomsday) ch.10 (4:622-4# 2434). Ahmad bin Hambal has recorded it in his *Musnad* (1:4-5, 281-2; 2:435-6; 3:116,244,247-8) in six different contexts through different narrators and all these contexts are linked through a sound chain of transmission. Dārimī narrated it in his *Sunan* (2:234-5#2807); Abū Dāwūd Tayālisī, *Musnad* (pp.268-9#2010); Abū 'Awānah, *Musnad* (1:171-4, 183-4); Ibn Abū Shaybah, *al-Musannaf* (11:444-51#11720-1,3); Abū Ya'lā, *Musand* (1:56-9#59); Ibn Hibbān, *as-Sahīh* (14:377-9, 393-7# 6464,6467); Bayhaqī, *Shu'ab-ul-īmān* (1:285-6#308-9); Baghawī, *Sharh-us-sunnah*(15:157-60#4333); Haythamī in *Mawārid-uz-zam'ān* (pp.642-3#2589) and *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (10:373-4).

1. Qur'an (*at-Tahrīm*) 66:8.

(ﷺ) through the means of his eternal blessing, on the other hand, He will allow them to enter Paradise, with all the glory and splendour associated with such an occasion. A visible proof of the divine concession will be the enveloping light to which they will be entitled through the means of Allah's Prophet (ﷺ).

All these traditions and proofs reinforce the reality of intermediation and endorse it as a valid religious concept, and not as a figment of the frenzied imagination. If, in spite of these irrefutable indicators, someone still tries to confine intermediation through the Prophet (ﷺ) only to his life on earth, he is living in a world of fantasy and self-fabrication because confining intermediation to his physical existence remains unsupported both by argument and precedent.

The Prophet (ﷺ) wields authority even after his death

Some people, on account of their ignorance and paucity of knowledge, express the view that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) after his death wields no authority and he can neither hear us nor can he pray for us. May Allah guard the believers against such a perverse view! No Muslim with sound belief can ever conceive such a possibility. Intermediation through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is an established fact supported by evidence from the Qur'an and the Sunnah and this is a proof of his stature and distinction. Those who do not believe in intermediation through the Prophet (ﷺ) after his death are trying to lower his exceptional status.

It is part of the belief of Ahl-us-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah that a dead person can hear, possesses awareness, benefits

from the virtuous deeds of the living and is disturbed by their wicked deeds. (It will be discussed in the sixth chapter.) The point that clamours for attention is that this belief has been established through the experience of an ordinary man. When an ordinary person can exercise such power, how can we possibly deny it to the Prophet (ﷺ) who is the most superior person among Allah's creatures. Various authentic traditions testify to the reality that the Prophet (ﷺ) is alive even after his death. It sounds like a paradox to perverse ears but in his case it is as true as the daily sunrise. He returns our greetings, the affairs of the Ummah are reported to him, he asks forgiveness from Allah over the evil deeds of the Ummah and praises and glorifies Him over her good deeds. It is stated in a number of traditions that once Marwān saw Abū Ayyūb al-Ansārī lying down over the Prophet's grave and asked him what he was doing. Abū Ayyūb al-Ansārī gave a faith-freshening reply. The tradition is recorded below:

It is attributed to Dāwūd bin Abū Sālih.
He says: one day Marwān came and he saw

> *that a man was lying down with his mouth turned close to the Prophet's grave. Then he (Marwān) said to him, "Do you know what are you doing?" When he moved towards him, he saw that it was Abū Ayyūb al-Ansārī. (In reply) he said, "Yes (I know) I have come to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and not to a stone. I have heard it from the Messenger of God (ﷺ) not to cry over religion when its guardian is competent. Yes, shed tears over religion when its guardian is incompetent.* [1]

Hākim declared that it fulfils the requirements of authentic traditions as demanded by Bukhārī and Muslim, while Dhahabī has also called it *sahīh* (sound).

Seek his help today

The gist of the discussion is that it is a futile exercise to prove arguments against intermediation through the Prophet (ﷺ) and to establish authentic traditions as weak and invalid through self-concocted strategies According to the Prophet's own statement, the benefit of his blessings is still a tangible reality as it was during his earthly life; his death has not changed this reality. And it is further reinforced by the tradition with an impeccable chain of

1. Related by Ahmad bin Hambal with a sound chain of transmission in his *Musnad* (5:422); Hākim, *al-Mustadrak* (4:515); Tabarānī, *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (4:158# 3999), *al-Mu'jam-ul-awsat* (1:199-200#286; 10:169# 9362); Subkī, *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (p.113); Haythamī, *Majma'-uz-zawāi'd* (5:245); 'Alā'-ud-Dīn 'Alī in *Kanz-ul-'ummāl* (6:88#14967).

transmission that on the Day of Judgement, the process of accountability will be initiated on his recommendation.

Let's briefly speculate on the Day of Judgement. The heat and warmth will be at its climax. The people will face deep distress. The Lord will be present in His chair. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) will also honour the gathering with his presence and he will be accompanied by all the prophets. The earlier believers and the later ones will also form part of the audience. In this scenario, when these people, presuming Adam (عليه السلام) as the first ancestor, will call on him and request him to help them out of their trouble, but he will send them on to Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام), who will refer them to Mūsā (عليه السلام), who will direct them to see 'Īsā (عليه السلام) and finally he will send all of them to the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), the intercessor of mankind. During the whole process, none of the honoured prophets will say: 'what disbelief are you perpetrating and what have you come to us for? Allah Himself is there, why don't you go to Him?' On the other hand, they will despatch them willingly and expectantly to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) so that he may intercede on their behalf before God. Thus we come to realize that intermediation and appeal for help is a continuous process, uninterrupted by the exigencies of space-time and unaffected by the laws of physical existence, and on the Day of Judgement a consensus among the prophets will emerge on the conceptual and practical relevance of intermediation. The subtle point to note is that when the first personality in the world of humanity committed error, he offered to the Lord the mediation of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and as a result his error was condoned. The Prophet's mediation relieved him of the

agony he had been suffering from as a consequence of his error. Similarly on the Day of Judgement when life on earth will come to an end and the people will experience the agony of waiting in uncertain anticipation of the process of accountability, they will be liberated from their torture only through the means of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). It is now transparent from these examples that the first man in the world of humanity was relieved of his agony through the mediation of the Prophet (ﷺ), and the world is drawing to a close and mankind is passing through the torture of waiting in a superheated environment, they will also be relieved of their ordeal through the means of the Prophet (ﷺ). Fortunate are the people who even today hold on to this belief and will also witness this scenario on the Day of Judgement.

<u>SECTION FOUR</u>

Intermediation through the Prophet's relics

It is a fact that the objects and articles associated with the righteous and the virtuous are an overflowing source of bounty and munificence. This is the reason that it was the usual practice of the Companions to preserve his relics and to draw benefits and blessings out of them. This proves that they offered them to Allah as instruments of mediation when they needed His help and assistance. Allah Himself has made reference to the relics of the prophets in the Holy Qur'ān. For example, the following Qur'ānic verse indicates the mode in which Banī Israel drew on the relics of the progeny of Mūsā (عليه السلام) and Hārūn (عليه السلام):

And their prophet told them: 'a sign of his authority (being from Allah) is that there

> *shall come to you the Ark of the covenant. In it there shall be an assurance of security (peace of mind) from your Lord and from the relics left by the family of Mūsā and Hārūn carried by angels. In this is a symbol for you if you indeed have faith.*[1]

At another place in the Holy Qur'ān Allah has related the incident in which Ya'qūb (عليه السلام) drew blessing from Yūsuf's shirt:

> *'Go with this my shirt and cast it over the face of my father; he will come to see clearly, and (then) come you to me together with all your family.' And when the caravan left (Egypt), their father (Ya'qūb) said (while sitting in Kan'ān): 'I do indeed scent the presence of Yūsuf if you do not think me a dotard on account of old age.' They said: 'By God! Truly you are in the same old drifting state of love.' Then when the bearer of the good news came, he cast the shirt over*

1. Qur'ān (*al-Baqarah*) 2:248.

> *Ya'qūb's face and instantaneously his eyesight returned. Ya'qūb said: 'Did I not say to you, I know from God that which you know not.'*[1]

A study of the books on tradition and the Prophet's life and conduct reveals that, in addition to relying on the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) for prayer, the Companions received blessings from him in various other ways. For example, they had their bodies touched with his hand; they themselves touched his body as a form of benediction; they blessed themselves with the water left over from his ablution and also with the water he used to wash his hands; and with his leftover food. Similarly, they received blessings from his sweat, from his saliva, from the mucus coming out of his nose, from his hair (which came off during his haircut and they did not let them fall on the ground), from his nails, from his dress, from his staff, from his ring, from his bed and cot and from his praying mat. In short, they drew blessings from any object that was even marginally associated with his body. Even after his death, the Companions and the leading believers derived blessings from his grave and the pulpit. They received blessing even from the houses and places where he had lived, the spots at which he had prayed and the dust of the paths he had walked through. Every successive generation after the period of the Companions and Successors including caliphs, kings and religious leaders, preserved the Prophet's signs and relics with great reverence. On special days

1. Qur'ān (*Yūsuf*) 12:93-6.

Muslims were allowed to see them, draw blessings from them and pray to Allah through their mediation.

This reverential attitude should be maintained in the context of the Prophet's traditions and in any reference to his exalted personality. The same attitude should be reflected in our treatment of the Companions and members of the Prophet's family. If we consistently display this attitude, Allah will not only reinforce our faith but also shower His blessings on us. But if we treat them disrespectfully, Allah will curse us with trouble and affliction, which the common man often fails to understand. The Companions possessed a number of his relics. Not only some of these are given below, but also the way they are used as means is also briefly described:

1. Desire to be buried in the Prophet's vicinity

'Umar bin al-Khattāb had a strong desire to be buried in the vicinity of the Prophet's grave. When he was at his deathbed, he sent his son to seek permission from 'Ā'ishah as she had reserved the specific spot for herself. But, on 'Umar's request, she responded: 'I liked to keep this spot for myself but now I give preference to 'Umar's desire over mine.' 'Abdullāh returned and conveyed the glad tidings to his father. At this 'Umar said: 'all praise to Allah! This was the most pressing matter for me.' The tradition runs as follows:

Husayn bin 'Abd-ur-Rahmān from 'Amr bin Maymūn al-Awdī has narrated: He said: I saw 'Umar bin al-Khattāb, he said: 'O 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar! Go over to the Mother of the Believers, 'Ā'ishah, and give her my regards and then ask her if I am permitted to be buried beside my companions.' 'Ā'ishah replied: 'I had this spot marked for myself and today I prefer 'Umar to myself.' When he came back, 'Umar asked him: 'what news have you brought?' He replied: 'O leader of the believers! She has given you the permission.' At this 'Umar said: 'today nothing matters to me more than this resting place. When I pass away, take me to (this place), give my regards and request that 'Umar bin al-Khattāb seeks permission. If I am given the permission, then bury me

> *there, otherwise bury me in an ordinary graveyard for the Muslims.'*[1]

The only interpretation of the desire expressed by both 'Umar and 'Ā'ishah is that they wanted to receive divine blessings through the mediation of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) by being buried close to him.

2. The small water bag of leather as a source of blessing

1. 'Abd-ur-Rahmān bin Abū 'Amrah has attributed it to his grandmother who heard it from Kabshah Ansāriyyah:

> *Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) went over to see her and there was a small water bag of leather hanging there. He drank water from it while standing. Then she cut off the mouth of water bag on account of its blessing because the Prophet's mouth had touched it.*[2]

1. Bukhārī transmitted it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *janā'iz* (funerals) ch.94 (1:469#1328), b. of *fadā'il-us-sahābah* (virtues of the Companions) ch.8 (3:1355#3497).
2. Ibn Mājah narrated it with a sound chain of transmission in his *Sunan*, b. of *ashribah* (drinks) ch.21 (2:1132#3423); Tirmidhī graded it *hasan* (fair) *sahīh* (sound) *gharīb* (rare or unfamiliar) in his *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *ashribah*, ch.18 (4:306#1892), and in *ash-Shamā'il-ul-Muhammadiyyah* (p.178#203), Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (6:434); Humaydī, *Musnad* (1:172#354); Ibn

2. Umm Sulaym cut off the mouth of the water bag from which the Prophet (ﷺ) had drunk water. Anas says:

> *That the Prophet (ﷺ) came over to see Umm Sulaym and there was a small leather bag (of water) hanging in the house. He drank (water) from this leather bag while standing. Anas says that Umm Sulaym cut off the mouth of the leather bag so it is (still) with us.*[1]

3. Cure through the mediation of the Prophet's gown

It is narrated by 'Abdullāh, a slave freed by Asmā' bint Abū Bakr:

Hibbān, *as-Sahīh* (12:138-9#5318); Tabarānī, *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (25:15#8); and Baghawī in *Sharh-us-sunnah* (11:379#3042).

1. Related by Ahmad bin Hambal in his *Musnad* (3:119; 6:431); Tirmidhī, *ash-Shamā'il-ul-Muhammadiyyah* (p.179#205); Abū Dāwūd Tayālisī, *Musnad* (p.229#1650); and by Tabarānī in *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (25:127#307) and in *al-Mu'jam-ul-awsat* (1:379#658).

That she (Asmā' bint Abū Bakr) took out the gown that belonged to Kasrawanī Tayālisān, its collar and slits were lined with silk cloth. She said: 'this was in the possession of 'Ā'ishah, when she died, I took it over and the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) used to wear it. We used to wash it for the sick and along with it we asked for the recovery of the sick.[1]

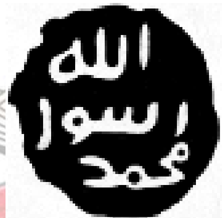
Nawawī has commented on it:

And this tradition confirms that it is a meritorious act to seek blessing through the relics and robes of the virtuous.[2]

4. The Prophet's ring

'Abdullāh bin 'Umar has narrated:

1. Related by Muslim in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *libās waz-zīnah* (dress and embellishment) ch.2 (3:1641#2069); Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, b. of *libās* (dress) 4:49 (#4054); Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, b. of *libās*, ch.18 (2:1188-9#3594); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (6:347-8); Ibn Sa'd, *at-Tabaqāt-ul-kubrā* (1:454).
2. Nawawī, *Sharh Sahīh Muslim* (14:44).



> *The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had a silver ring made for himself. It was in his hand, then it remained in Abū Bakr's hand, then it remained in 'Umar's hand, then it remained in 'Uthmān's hand, then from his hand it fell into a well at Arīs. The following words were engraved on it: Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah.*[1]

5. Blessing through the Prophet's blanket

The Mother of Believers, 'Ā'ishah lovingly guarded a blanket in which the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) had passed away as is attributed to Abū Hurayrah that 'Ā'ishah took out a thick blanket and showed it to us. She said:

1. Related by Bukhārī in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *libās* (dress) ch.48 (5:2204#5535); Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *libās waz-zīnah* (dress and embellishment) ch.12 (3:1656#2091); and Abū Dāwūd in *Sunan*, b. of *khātim* (ring) 4:88 (#4215).

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) had breathed his last in this blanket.[1]

6. Blessing through the Prophet's sandals

1. Anas kept with him a pair of the Prophet's shoes and a cup from which he used to drink. Bukhārī comments with reference to the pair of shoes:

'Īsā bin Tahmān reported that Anas brought out a pair of old sandals and showed them to us. Each one of the pair had two laces. Then Thābit al-Bunānī, reporting it from Anas, told me that the pair of shoes belonged to the Prophet (ﷺ).[2]

2. Similarly, according to another tradition, 'Ubayd bin Jurayh said to 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar: "I see you wearing a pair of shoes shorn of hair." 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar replied: "I have seen the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) wearing such shoes which are denuded of hair, and he used to put his feet

1. Related by Bukhārī in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *khumus* (fifth part) ch.5 (3:1131#2941).
2. Bukhārī transmitted it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *khumus* (fifth part) ch.5 (3:1131#2940), b. of *libās* (dress) ch.40 (5:2200#5519-20); Tirmidhī in *ash-Shamā'il-ul-Muhammadiyyah* (p.83#73).

into them after ablution. Therefore, I like to wear such shoes."[1]

3. Qastallānī writes in his book *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (2:118-9) that 'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd was one of the Prophet's attendants and attended him with a pillow, a tooth-brush, a pair of sandals and water for ablution. When the Prophet (ﷺ) stood up, he helped him put on the sandals, and when he sat down, 'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd picked up the sandals and tucked them under his arms.

Qastallānī adds: One of the virtues, benefits and blessings of the Prophet's sandals has been particularly stressed by Shaykh Abū Ja'far bin 'Abd-ul-Majīd. He says: I gave a sample of the pair of sandals to one of my students. One day he came over to me and said: yesterday, I discovered a strange blessing in the sandals. My wife was on the point of death from severe pain. I placed the sandals on the aching spot and said: O Allah! show me a miracle from the owner of this pair of sandals. Allah showed His mercy and my wife instantly recovered.[2]

Abū Bakr Ahmad bin Abū Muhammad 'Abdullāh bin Husayn Qurtubī has given a poetic expression to his feelings about the pair of sandals:

1. Related by Bukhārī in his *as-Sahīh* b. of *libās* (dress) ch.36 (5:2199#5513); and Tirmidhī in *ash-Shamā'il-ul-Muhammadiyyah* (p.84#74).
2. Qastallānī, *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (2:466-7).

Such shoes whose exalted status we acknowledged because only through this acknowledgement, we exalt ourselves. Therefore, they should be kept at a lofty place, because, in reality, these are the crown (on the head) although they appear to be shoes.[1]

When Imam Fakhānī cast his first glance at the sandals, he burst into a poetic expression:

And if the Madman of Laylā had been asked to choose between a meeting with Laylā and the pelf of the world, he would have spontaneously replied: "I hold the dust blowing up from her shoes even dearer than my own soul and it is the best cure for blowing off its problems".

It is noteworthy that scholars from the Deoband school of thought have written books about the Prophet's shoes:

1. Qastallānī, *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (2:470); Nabhānī, *al-Anwār-ul-Muhammadiyyah* (p.258).

1. Mawlānā Shihāb-ud-Dīn Ahmad Muqrī wrote a book called *Fath-ul-muta'āl fi madh-in-ni'āl*.
2. Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī wrote a tract *Nayl-ush-shifā bi-ni'āl-il-Mustafā*, which is part of his book *Zād-us-sa'īd*.

Mawlānā Muhammad Zakariyyā Kandhalwī comments:

> "The virtues and blessings of the Prophet's sandals are found at the end of the tract *Zād-us-Sa'īd* by Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī. Anyone who is keen on details is advised to refer to it. In short, its blessings are infinite. The scholars have performed repeated experiments. If you keep them in your possession, you may see the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), you may be delivered from the oppressors and may achieve popularity. In brief, to depend on it as a source of intermediation is an unwavering guarantee of success. The method of intermediation is also explained in it."[1]

This discussion clearly proves that the real capital is the unfathomed love for the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and the unflagging respect for the things and objects directly or indirectly associated with him, as has been poetically expressed by Imām Ahmad Radā Khān:

1. Kandhalwī, *Shamā'il Tirmidhī with Urdu commentary Khasā'il nabawī* (p.77).

"If I have a pair of the Prophet's sandals to place on my head."

"Then I shall consider myself no less than a properly crowned king."

7. Blessing through the holy goblet

1. Abū Burdah narrates:

'Abdullāh bin Salām said to me, "Shouldn't I serve you (water) in the goblet from which the Prophet (ﷺ) had drunk.[1]

2. Abū Hāzim from Sahl bin Sa'd narrates:

One day the Companions had the pleasure of the Prophet's company at Saqīfah banī Sā'idah. Then he asked Sahl to get him (some water). Then I brought out this goblet for him and served him (water) in

1. Bukhārī narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *ashribah* (drinks) ch.29 (5:2134).

> *it. Abū Hāzim said: Sahl brought out that goblet for us and we also drank from it. Then 'Umar bin 'Abd-ul-'Azīz requested that he should hand over the goblet to him and Sahl handed it over to him. And the tradition by Abū Bakr bin Ishāq says: he said, O Sahl, get me some water to drink.*[1]

3. Hajjāj bin Hassān relates:

> *We were with Anas that he sent for a vessel, which had three female iron lizards and an iron ring in it. He took it out of a black cover, which was less than medium size and more than one-eighth of it, and at Anas's order, water was brought in it for us. We had the water and poured some of it over our heads and faces and sent salutations on the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).*[2]

The chain of transmission of this tradition is *sahīh* (sound).

---

1. Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *ashribah* (drinks) ch.9 (3:1591#2007); Bukhārī, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *ashribah,* ch.29 (5:2134#5314).
2. Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (3:187); Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:370).

4. And when the goblet that was in the possession of Anas, and from which the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) used to drink, cracked, he took tremendous pains to repair it. His painstaking efforts are an ample proof of the love and respect the Companions had for the articles directly or indirectly associated with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). The tradition says:

> *When the Prophet's goblet cracked, (Anas) repaired it with a silver chain, instead of (repairing it) with something ordinary. 'Āsim (the narrator) says: 'I have myself seen that goblet and have also drunk water from it.'*[1]

8. Blessing through the holy hair

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) himself taught his followers to preserve the relics and practically created in his Companions the awareness and the urgency that they should let no opportunity slip to collect his blessings.

1. Anas narrates that after performing the sacrificial rites at the juncture of hajj:

1. Bukhārī narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *khumus* (fifth part) ch.5 (3:1132#2942); and Ibn Kathīr in *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:369).

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) held the right side of his head in front of the barber, he shaved off his hair. Then he called Abū Talhah al-Ansārī and handed him the (shaved) hair. Then he held the other side in front of the barber, he also shaved off the hair on this side and he also handed those hair to Abū Talhah and said to him: 'distribute these hair among the people.'[1]

2. Ibn Sīrīn has reported it from Anas:

When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had his head shaved; Abū Talhah was the first person to receive his hair.[2]

3. Similarly another tradition is attributed to Anas:

---

1. Muslim transmitted it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of hajj, ch.56 (2:948#1305); Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, b. of *manāsik* (rituals of hajj) (2:203#1981); Tirmidhī in *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of hajj, ch.73 (3:255#912) and graded it *hasan* (fair) *sahīh* (sound); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (3:111,208,214); Humaydī, *Musnad* (2:512#1220); Ibn Khuzaymah, *as-Sahīh* (4:299#2928); Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (5:134); and Baghawī in *Sharh-us-sunnah* (7:206#1962).
2. Bukhārī transmitted it in his *as-Sahīh* b. of *wudū'* (ablution) ch.32 (1:75#169).

> *I saw that a barber was shaving the Prophet's head and the Companions stood around him in the shape of a circle. They wished that each strand of hair falling off the Prophet's head should fall into the hand of one of them (they did not wish it to fall on the ground).*[1]

4. Ibn Sīrīn relates:

> *I told 'Abīdah that we are in possession of the Prophet's hair which I obtained from Anas or his family. 'Abīdah said: 'if I possessed anyone of these hair, I will hold that hair even dearer than the entire world and whatever it contains.'*[2]

Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī says: "This tradition furnishes the proof that it is valid to draw divine blessings from the Prophet's hair and confirms the permissibility of its acquisition."[3]

5. Thābit al-Bunānī relates that Anas said to him:

---

1. Muslim narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *fadā'il* (virtues) ch.19 (4:1812#2324); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (3:133,137); Ibn Sa'd, *at-Tabaqāt-ul-kubrā* (1:431); Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (7:68); and Ibn Kathīr in *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:140).
2. Related by Bukhārī in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *wudū'* (ablution) ch.32 (1:75#168).
3. Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *Fath-ul-bārī* (1:274).

> *This is a hair belonging to the dear Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), so you should place it under my tongue. He says the hair was placed under his tongue and when he was buried, the hair was still under his tongue.*[1]

6. ‘Uthmān bin ‘Abdullāh bin Mawhab relates:

> *My family sent me to Umm Salamah with a goblet of water. Israel clutched his three fingers in a manner that they looked like the goblet, which contained the Prophet’s hair, and when someone was under the influence of an evil eye or suffered from pain, he used to send a utensil (of water) to Umm Salamah. So when I peered into the utensil, I saw a few red hairs.*[2]

Badr-ud-Dīn ‘Aynī says: “Umm Salamah kept the Prophet’s hair in a silver bottle. When people fell ill, they

---

1. Ibn Hajar ‘Asqalānī, *al-Isābah fī tamyīz-is-sahābah* (1:71).
2. Bukhārī, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *libās* (dress) ch.64 (5:2210#5557); Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:390).

received blessings from those hairs and recovered from their illness as a result of this blessing. If someone was under the spell of a malevolent eye or just fell ill, he would send his wife to Umm Salamah with a utensil holding water; she would pass the hair through the water and the patient would recover by drinking that water, and after that the hair was put away in the bottle."[1]

9. Victory in war through the mediation of the Prophet's hair

Qādī 'Iyād narrates in *ash-Shifā* (2:619):

> *Khālid bin Walīd's cap contained some of the Prophet's hair. When the cap fell away during battle, he rushed to grab it. When a large number of Companions lost their lives as martyrs in this battle, the people blamed him. He replied: 'I did not put up all that struggle just for the cap, but the cap contained the Prophet's hair. I feared I would be deprived of their blessings*

1. Badr-ud-Dīn 'Aynī, *'Umdat-ul-qārī* (22:49).

in case they fell into the hands of the infidels.'

10. Making a coffin out of the clothes worn by the Prophet (ﷺ)

1. When Alī's mother, Fātimah bint Asad died, her funeral rites were meticulously observed. After the bath, when it was time to dress her up in a shirt, the Prophet (ﷺ) handed his own shirt to the women and commanded them to dress her up in that shirt and then wrap the coffin round it.[1]

To drape her dead body in his shirt was most presumably intended to shower divine blessings on her.

2. When the Prophet's daughter, Zaynab or Umm Kalthūm died, he blessed her with his own trouser-sash to wrap the coffin.[2]

---

1. Tabarānī narrated it in *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (24:351-2#871) and *al-Mu'jam-ul-awsat* (1:152-3#191); Ibn 'Abd-ul-Barr, *al-Istī'āb fī ma'rifat-il-ashāb* (4:382); Abū Nu'aym, *Hilyat-ul-awliyā' wa tabaqāt-ul-asfiyā'* (3:121); Ibn-ul-Jawzī, *al-'Ilal-ul-mutanāhiyyah* (1:268-9#433), *Sifat-us-safwah* (2:38); Ibn-ul-Athīr, *Asad-ul-ghābah* (7:213); Samhūdī, *Wafā'-ul-wafā* (3:897-8); and Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī in *al-Isābah fī tamyīz-is-sahābah* (4:380).
2. Bukhārī narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *janā'iz* (funerals) ch.8, 17 (1:422-3,425#1195,1204); Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *janā'iz*, ch.12 (2:648#939); Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, b. of *janā'iz*, (3:200#3157); Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, b. of *janā'iz* (4:28-33); Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *janā'iz*, ch.15 (3:315#990); Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, b. of *janā'iz*, ch.8 (1:468-9#1458); Mālik bin Anas, *al-Muwattā*, b. of *janā'iz*, ch.1 (1:222#2); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (5:84, 6:407); Humaydī, *Musnad* (1:175-6#360); Ibn Hibbān, *as-Sahīh* (7:302,304#3032-3); Tabarānī, *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (25:45-50#86,88-95,97-99).

3. Similarly, a woman presented a shawl to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). When he was dressed in it, someone said to him: O Messenger of Allah! What a beautiful shawl! Please give it to me; and he gave the shawl to him. The audience were displeased by it and started cursing the person who had requested for the shawl: when you knew that the Prophet (ﷺ) never turns down the request of a petitioner, then why did you ask for this shawl? That person replied: I have taken this sheet of cloth not for wearing but for my coffin to draw blessings from it. The words of the tradition are as follows:

Sahl bin Sa'd says: A woman brought a burdah*, that is, a sheet of cloth for the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Sahl asked the people: do you know what* burdah *is? People replied: it*

> *is a large and open sheet of cloth. Sahl said:* burdah *is a kind of sheet which has stripes in it. The woman said: O Messenger of Allah! I present (this sheet) to you for wearing. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) accepted the shawl because, under the circumstances, he needed it. Then the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) wore it. One of the Companions had his eyes set on the shawl and he said to the Prophet (ﷺ): What a graceful sheet of cloth! Please give it to me. He said: Yes, you take it. When the Prophet (ﷺ) left, his Companions rebuked him. They said: You haven't done good (especially) when you saw that the Prophet (ﷺ) had accepted it and also needed it, and you know that whenever a petition is made to the Prophet (ﷺ), he never turns it down. The man replied: when the Prophet (ﷺ) had worn it, I expected it to bring blessings to me in case I am buried in it.*[1]

Sahl bin Sa'd relates that he was buried in that sheet of cloth.

4. Jābir bin 'Abdullāh narrates:

1. Bukhārī narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *adab* (good manners) ch.39 (5:2245#5689), b. of *janā'iz* (funeral prayers) ch.28 (1:429#1218), b. of *buyū'* (sales) ch.31 (2:737#1987), b. of *libās* (dress) ch.17 (5:2189#5473); Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, b. of *libās*, ch.1 (2:1177#3555); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (5:333-4); and Ibn Sa'd in *at-Tabaqāt-ul-kubrā* (1:454).

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) went over to 'Abdullāh bin Ubayy after he had been buried. He had his dead body taken out, covered his mouth with his saliva and draped him in his own shirt.[1]

The same tradition has also been reported in a modified form:

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) reached 'Abdullāh bin Ubayy when he had been placed inside the grave. He commanded him to be taken out (and when he was taken out) he (the Prophet) placed him over his knees, rubbed him with his own saliva, breathed into him and draped him in his own shirt.[2]

5. 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar narrates:

---

1. Bukhārī transmitted in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *janā'iz* (funeral prayers) ch.22,76 (1:427#1211); and Ahmad bin Hambal in his *Musnad* (3:371).
2. Bukhārī related it in *as-Sahīh*, b. of *libās* (dress) ch.7 (5:2184#5459), b. of *janā'iz* (funeral prayers) ch.22 (1:427#1210); Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *sifāt-ul-munāfiqīn wa ahkāmuhum* (pertaining to the characteristics of the hypocrites and the command concerning them) 4:2140 (#2773); Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, b. of *janā'iz* (4:37-8); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (3:381); Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (3:402); and Wāqidī in *Kitāb-ul-maghāzī* (2:1057).

> *When 'Abdullāh bin Ubayy died, his son went over to the Messenger of Allah* (ﷺ) *and said to him: 'O Messenger of Allah! I implore you to bless him with your shirt to make out of it a coffin for him, and you offer prayer on it and also pray for his forgiveness.' So he gave him his shirt.*[1]

6. When 'Abdullāh bin Sa'd bin Sufyān was martyred in the battle of Tabūk, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) coffined him in his own shirt.[2]

7. When 'Abdullāh bin Hārith bin 'Abd-ul-Muttalib bin Hashim died, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) buried him in his own

---

1. Bukhārī narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *libās* (dress) ch.7 (5:2184#5460), b. of *janā'iz* (funerals) ch.22 (1:427#1210), b. of *tafsīr* (interpretation of the Qur'ān) ch.160,161 4:1715,1716 (#4393,4395); Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *sifāt-ul-munāfiqīn wa ahkāmuhum* (the signs of hypocrites and their commands) 4:2141 (#2774); Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, b. of *janā'iz* (funerals) 4:36, and *Tafsir* (1:551-2#244); Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *tafsīr*, ch.10 (5:279-80#3098); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (2:18); Ibn Hibbān, *as-Sahīh* (7:447#3175); Ibn 'Abd-ul-Barr, *as-Istī'āb fī ma'rifat-il-ashāb* (2:336); Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (3:402; 8:199), and *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (5:287); Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (3:635); and Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī in *al-Isābah fī tamyīz-is-sahābah* (2:336).
2. Ibn-ul-Athīr, *Asad-ul-ghābah* (3:262); Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *al-Isābah fī tamyīz-is-sahābah* (2:318).

shirt-coffin and said: "He is fortunate and he has received blessings from it."[1]

11. Blessings through the Prophet's spittle

In 6 Hegira, when the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) set out for Makkah with his devoted Companions to offer hajj, the infidels intercepted him. Since the intention was to perform hajj, he did not allow his Companions to be provoked, though they bubbled over with the spirit of self-sacrifice for the divine pleasure. Meanwhile, negotiations between the two parties were held. 'Urwah bin Mas'ūd (who had not embraced Islam at that time) represented the infidels. At this juncture, he directly witnessed the passionate attachment of the Companions with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and when he returned to his camp, he mentioned it to the infidels in these words:

1. Ibn 'Abd-ul-Barr narrated it in *al-Istī'āb fī ma'rifat-il-ashāb* (2:279); Ibn-ul-Athīr, *Asad-ul-ghābah* (3:207); and Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī in *al-Isābah fī tamyīz-is-sahābah* (2:292).

O my nation, (the infidels of Makkah)! By God! I have attended the courts of the kings (royal courts). I have also been to (the courts) of Caesar, Khosrau and Najāshī, but I swear by Allah that I have never come across a king who is revered as much by his Companions as Muhammad (ﷺ). By Allah, whenever he throws out his spittle, it lands on the palm of some Companion or the other who rubs it on his face or body. When he commands his Companions, they rush to comply with it, and when he performs ablution, they even quarrel with one another to obtain the leftover water, and when he is speaking, the Companions lower their voices in his presence and, out of reverence, they do not look at him straight. And surely he has made a good offer, so you should accept it.[1]

2. 'Ā'ishah relates that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) used to mention in the context of patients:

In the name of Allah, with the help of the soil of our land and the saliva from the

1. Bukhārī narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *shurūt* (conditions) ch.15 (2:976#2581); and Bayhaqī in *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (4:104).

mouth of some of us, our patient shall recover by the will of our God.[1]

Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī's comments on the tradition are as follows:

"The Prophet's words "from the saliva of some of us" prove that he used to apply his saliva while using a protective invocation (*ruqyah*) over something. Nawawī says: 'the tradition means that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) put his saliva on his forefinger and rubbed it on to the soil, then he froze it and applied it to the patient or the wound and while applying it, he recited the words of the tradition.' Qurtubī says: 'this tradition proves that it is valid to treat any disease by using a protective invocation over it, and it also makes it clear that it was a common and popular practice among them.' He is also of the opinion that the Prophet's placing of his forefinger on the soil and sprinkling it with earth justifies its relevance while blowing protective invocation through it… And, surely, it describes the mode of receiving blessings through the attributes of the Lord and the relics of the Prophet (ﷺ). Then blowing breath laden with protective

1. Bukhārī transmitted it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *tibb* (medicine) ch.37 (5:2168#5413); Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *salām* (peace) ch.21 (4:1724#2194); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (6:93); Hākim, *al-Mustadrak* (4:412); and Baghawī in *Sharh-us-sunnah* (5:224-5#1414).

> invocation into something and a divinely inspired sense of purpose and determination have amazing implications which simply stun human reason.[1]

There are countless examples found in the authentic books on tradition that when a child was born, the Companions brought him to the Prophet (ﷺ) to name him and to administer him the first food after his birth. He put his saliva into the mouth of the newborn and thus the first thing the child's belly received was the Prophet's saliva.

3. Asmā' bint Abū Bakr says:

> *I (while in Makkah) was pregnant with 'Abdullāh bin Zubayr (that is, he was in my belly). The period of pregnancy was near completion that I set out for Medina. I got down at Qubā' and gave birth to my son ('Abdullāh bin Zubayr) at Qubā'. Then I took him over to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and placed him in his lap. He sent for a date and chewed it. Then he put his saliva into the child's mouth, and the first thing that entered his stomach was the Prophet's*

1. Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *Fath-ul-bārī* (10:208).

saliva. Then he applied the date to his palate, prayed for him and offered his congratulations.[1]

4. Anas narrates:

When 'Abdullāh, the son of Abū Talhah al-Ansārī, was born, I brought him to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). At that time, he was wearing a shawl and rubbing oil on to a camel. He said: have you got any dates? I replied, yes. Then I gave him a few dates, he munched them with his teeth and then he put it into the child's mouth by opening it. The child started sucking it. He said: the Muslims of Medina love the dates and then he named the child as 'Abdullāh.[2]

1. Bukhārī narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *fadā'il-us-sahābah* (virtues of the Companions) ch.74 (3:1422-3#3697), b. of *'aqīqah*, ch.1 (5:2081#5152); Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *ādāb* (good manners) ch.5 (3:1691#2146); and Ahmad bin Hambal in *Musnad* (6:93,347).
2. Muslim narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *ādāb* (good manners) ch.5 (3:1689#2144); and Ahmad bin Hambal in *Musnad* (3:175,196,212).

12. Blessing through the Holy Prophet's perspiration

1. It is narrated by Thumāmah through Anas:

> *That Umm Sulaym used to spread a leather mattress for the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) where he enjoyed his midday nap. Anas relates that when the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) woke up, I collected his perspiration and his hair, put these into a bottle and blended them with perfume. Thumāmah relates that when Anas was on the brink of dying he willed that the scent be applied to his coffin. He relates that the scent was applied to his coffin.*[1]

2. There is another tradition on similar lines:

1. Related by Bukhārī in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *isti'dhān* (asking permission) ch.41 (5:2316#5925).

Anas bin Mālik relates that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) visited us and had his midday sleep. When he broke into perspiration, my mother came up with a bottle. She wiped his sweat and put it into the bottle. When the Prophet (ﷺ) woke up, he said to her: Umm Sulaym! What are you doing? She replied: this is your perspiration which we will mix with our perfume and this is the best perfume.[1]

13. Blessing through the Holy Prophet's handwash

It is narrated by Abū Mūsā:

1. Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *fadā'il* (merits) ch.22 (4:1815#2331); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (3:136).

I was with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) when he visited Ji'rānah, a place between Makkah and Medina. Bilāl also accompanied him. A bedouin called on him and said to him: O Muhammad! You haven't kept your promise. He said to him: cheer up! He said: you have repeated "cheer up!" a number of times. He turned in a state of rage to Abū Mūsā and Bilāl and said (to them): this person has rejected my glad tidings, but you should accept it. Both of them said: O Messenger of Allah, we have accepted (the glad tidings). Then he sent for a goblet full of water, washed both of his hands and face in it, rinsed his mouth in it and then said to them: drink it and pour it over your face and chest and cheer up. Both of them took over the goblet from him and did as he had asked them to do. Umm Salamah called them from

behind the curtain. Leave some of it in the utensil for your mother. So they left some water for her too.[1]

14. Blessing through the Holy Prophet's nail

Muhammad bin 'Abdullāh bin Zayd has reported it from his father:

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) had his hair cut in a piece of cloth and gave it to him, out of which he distributed some among the people, then he had his nails clipped and gave them to him.[2]

This tradition has a sound chain of transmission and its narrators are men of credibility.

15. Blessing through the Holy Prophet's staff

1. 'Abdullāh bin Anīs has reported it from his father:

---

1. Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *fadā'il-us-sahābah*, (virtues of the Companions) ch.38 (4:1943#2497).
2. Related by Ahmad bin Hambal in *Musnad* (4:42).

When I called on the Prophet (ﷺ), he said to me as he saw me: "The successful face (the successful man)." He says: I said to him: O Messenger of Allah, I have killed him (Khālid bin Sufyān). He said: You have spoken out the truth. Then the Messenger (ﷺ) stood up beside me and went to his house and blessed me with his staff and said: O 'Abdullāh bin Anīs! Keep it with you. When I came out carrying the staff, the people asked me: what is this (staff)? He replied: this has been given to me by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and he has commanded me to keep it. The people said: won't you return it to the Messenger (ﷺ)? Ask the Prophet (ﷺ) about it. 'Abdullāh bin Anīs says that I called on the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and asked him: O Messenger of Allah! why have you given this staff to me? He replied: on the Day of Judgement this will serve as a mark of recognition

between us when few people will cooperate with others. 'Abdullāh bin Anīs tied the staff to his sword and always kept it with himself until he passed away. He had willed about the staff that it should be placed in his coffin, so we buried them together.[1]

2. Anas bin Mālik has reported:

That he had a short stick given to him by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). When he died, it (the stick) was buried with him, between his shirt and the side of his body.[2]

3. Qādī 'Iyād relates in *as-Shifā* (2:621):

Jahjāhā al-Ghifārī snatched the Prophet's staff from 'Uthmān's hand, placed it on his knee and made a sacrilegious effort to break it. But people stalled him in his tracks by protesting, but (he was punished by the unknown for this act), a boil broke out on his knee which turned into a running

---

1. Ahmad bin hambal, *Musnad* (3:496); Ibn Sa'd, *at-Tabaqāt-ul-kubrā* (2:50-1).
2. Related by Ibn Kathīr in *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:368).

> *sore. As a result, his leg was amputated and he died the same year.*

16. Blessing through the Prophet's pulpit

Sitting on the pulpit, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) taught religion to his Companions. The lovers of the Prophet (ﷺ) were extremely fond of this pulpit and preserved it like his other relics to draw blessings from it. Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ relates:

> *Ibn 'Umar was often seen touching with his hand the part of the pulpit where the Prophet (ﷺ) used to sit and then rubbing his hand all over his body.*[1]

17. Blessing through the gold given by the Prophet (ﷺ)

It was the usual practice of the Companions that they held every object associated with the Prophet (ﷺ) even dearer than their own life and went to extraordinary lengths not to let it waste and to preserve it in its untarnished splendour. They saved the dinars given to them by the Prophet (ﷺ) and avoided spending them even in the face of the most pressing temptation.

Jābir bin 'Abdullāh has related:

Once I was travelling with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Since I was riding a sluggish camel, I lagged behind

1. Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ, *ash-Shifā* (2:620).

everyone. When the Prophet (ﷺ) passed by me, he asked: who are you? I said: Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh. He asked me: what’s the matter? I replied: I am riding a sluggish camel. He asked me for a stick and I brought the stick to him. He applied it to the camel and reprimanded it. Then the same camel ran ahead of all others. He wanted to buy my camel but I said: O Messenger of Allah! This is already yours and you can have it without payment. But the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) insisted on buying it and said: I have bought it from you for four dinars, and permitted me to ride it to Medina. When we reached Medina, he said:

> *O Bilāl! Pay (Jābir) his price, and add some more to it.*

Bilāl paid him four dinars, adding a carat of gold to the price.

Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh relates:

> *The (carat of) gold given by the beloved Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) never parted us. (The narrator says): and that carat (of gold gifted by the Holy Prophet) always remained in Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh’s purse, and never left it.*[1]

---

1. Bukhārī, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *wakālah* (representation) ch.8 (2:811#2185); Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *musāqāt* (watering) ch.21 (3;1222-3#715); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (3:299,314).

18. Blessings through the Prophet’s hands and feet

1. Anas bin Mālik relates:

> *After morning prayers, the servants of Medina brought their utensils full of water to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). He dipped his finger into every utensil. Often it happened in the mornings and he dipped his hand in it.*[1]

2. ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Umar narrates that he was in one of the regiments of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). People, fighting the non-believers, fled from the battlefield and I was one of them. Later, we repented and we decided to return to Medina and were determined to take part in the next holy war. There, we expressed a desire to meet the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). We would stay in Medina if our repentance were granted, otherwise we would move on to some other place. Then we called on the Prophet (ﷺ) and said to him: O Messenger of Allah! We are the fugitives. He turned to us and said:

1. Related by Muslim in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *fadā’il* (virtues) ch.19 (4:1812#2324).

No, you are going to join the fighting again. 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar relates that (on hearing this we were very pleased,) we came closer to him and kissed his hand. He said: I am the place of refuge for the Muslims, (that is, I am their asylum and place of retreat. Where will they go except coming to me, whether they are in error or not)?[1]

3. Umm Abān bint Wazi' bin Zāri' has reported from her grandfather Zāri' who was a member of the 'Abd-ul-Qays delegation. He said:

When we went to Medina, we hurried out of our vehicles and started kissing the hands and feet of the beloved Prophet (ﷺ).[2]

4. Bukhārī has added the following words to the tradition narrated by Umm Abān. According to him, her grandfather said:

---

1. Abū Dāwūd narrated it in his *Sunan*, b. of jihad (3:46#2647), b. of *adab* (good manners) (4:356#5223); Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of jihad, ch.36 (4:215#1716); Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, b. of *adab*, ch.16 (2:1221#3704); Bukhārī, *al-Adab-ul-mufrad* (p.338#972); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (2:70,100); Ibn Sa'd, *at-Tabaqāt-ul-kubrā* (4:145); Ibn Abū Shaybah, *al-Musannaf* (8:561-2#5256-7); Sa'īd bin Mansūr, *Sunan* (2:209-10#2539); Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (9:76-7), *Shu'ab-ul-īmān* (4:50-1#4311); and Baghawī in *Sharh-us-sunnah* (11:68-9#2708).
2. Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, b. of *adab* (good manners) 4:357 (#5225); Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (7:102).

> *When we arrived (in Medina), we were told: over there is the Messenger of Allah* (ﷺ). *So we grasped his hands and feet and kissed them.*[1]

5. Safwān bin 'Assāl has narrated:

> *A Jewish delegation kissed the hands and the feet of the Holy Prophet* (ﷺ).[2]

Summary

All the traditions discussed in the preceding pages are sound as they have been taken over from the certified and authentic books of traditions. They furnish ample and irrefutable evidence that the relics of the prophets and the saints are an effective source of divine blessings. The Companions, who preserved them meticulously, did not use them as display counters; on the contrary, they prayed to God through their mediation for averting calamities.

---

1. Related by Bukhārī in his *al-Adab-ul-mufrad* (p.339#975).
2. Ibn Mājah narrated it in his *Sunan*, b. of *adab* (good manners) ch.16 (2:1221#3705); Tirmidhī in *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *isti'dhān* (asking for permission) ch.33 (5:77#2733) and graded it *hasan* (fair) *sahīh* (sound); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (4:239); Ibn Abū Shaybah, *al-Musannaf* (8:562#6258); Abū Dāwūd Tayālisī, *Musnad* (p.160#1164); Hākim in *al-Mustadrak* (1:9) labelled it as *sahīh* while Dhahabī endorsed him. Tabarānī, *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (8:69-70#7396); Abū Nu'aym, *Hilyat-ul-awliyā' wa tabaqāt-ul-asfiyā'* (5:97-8); Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (6:268).

Besides, they also prove that the Companions drew blessings from them and achieved higher objectives.

CHAPTER SIX

Intermediation through Persons other than Prophets

Some people, in spite of their awareness of the injunctions of Qur'ān and Sunnah and the practice of the Companions, believe that it is possible to seek means in the earthly world and therefore, it is valid to seek means and extend help, but after death the creature has no control over his body, so how can he be relied upon as intermediary? Since it is beyond his control to serve as means and help others, so it is a form of disbelief.

This pig-headedness needs a twofold elaboration. First of all, it is an established fact that the creature, whether he is alive or resting in his grave, has absolutely no control over his body in both cases. These powers are only conferred on him by Allah, which we exercise during our worldly existence to handle a variety of matters. It, in fact, is Allah's blessing on the creature and, if Allah decides to withdraw it from him during his earthly life, he will be deprived even of the capacity to pull a straw. So, just as in this world of cause-and-effect, Allah has absolute control over all the powers of the creature, and yet it is not a kind of disbelief to rely on his means and seek help from him, similarly Allah does not condemn it as disbelief if someone seeks help from another creature after death or relies on his mediation. Just as in life it is disbelief to regard the creature as the real helper but he can be depended upon as means and his help can be derivatively invoked, similarly it is quite valid to regard the saints, as derivative helpers after death and to trust as means and beseech them for help.

Disbelief whether it is associated with a living person or a dead person remains disbelief. But to seek help from someone in his derivative capacity whether he is dead or alive is quite valid and does not amount to disbelief. Islam does not believe in double standards that an act is a form of belief if you perform it in a mosque and it turns into disbelief if you perform it in a temple. Islamic injunctions and the consequences that follow from them display a consistent pattern. Thus, if we treat a medical expert as the true helper and seek his assistance, it will be considered a form of disbelief. On the other hand, if we regard Allah as the true helper and seek the help of a virtuous person as a form of treatment, it is quite valid and is in no way inconsistent with Islamic Shariah.

The real purpose of a man's life is to be included among the favourites of God and to acquire as much knowledge of the divine springs of Power as is consistent with human limitations. Therefore, to realize this purpose, human beings rely on the saints and the virtuous people because they not only themselves have cultivated divine consciousness but also develop it in those who are closely associated with them. This is the reason we find Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) praying to God to include him among His favourites so that he could persuade his followers to pursue a similar goal:

> *O my Lord! Make me perfect in knowledge and conduct and include me*

among those whom You have rewarded with Your nearness.[1]

Here, the word *hukman* means the acme of human capacity for knowledge and conduct. Qādī Thanā'ullāh Pānī Patī says:

That is, to bring knowledge and conduct to such a climactic point that one develops the complete ability to represent the sublime office of divinity and to provide unflawed guidance and political leadership to humanity.[2]

Imam Rāzī writes:

"When acquisition of knowledge as the meaning of *hukman* has been established, it is equally established at the same time that he (the Prophet Ibrāhīm) prayed to Allah for the kind of knowledge that guaranteed his total absorption in the divine qualities and attributes, a knowledge whose purity serves as a self-adjusting filter to drive out all impurities." He further comments:

1. Qur'ān (*ash-Shu'arā'*) 26:83.
2. Qādī Thanā'ullāh Pānī Patī, *at-Tafsīr-ul-mazharī* (7:72).

> *And this knowledge proves that the divine knowledge or consciousness develops in the heart of a creature by Allah's will and Ibrāhīm's supplication – and include me among those whom You have rewarded with Your nearness – is a pointer to the fact that for a creature to be saintly or virtuous is exclusively the outcome of Allah's will.*[1]

Therefore, the acquisition of divine knowledge is made possible only by means of the virtuous and pious people. To be associated with them and to acquire divine knowledge through their mediation has been the practice of the prophets. And any creature who desires the favour of Allah through the means of the pious and the saintly people, never feels frustrated and his prayer is invariably granted, and he is included among the virtuous people. Then he attains divine consciousness as is declared by Allah:

> *And surely (even) in the Hereafter, they will be in the ranks of the righteous.*[2]

There is irrefutable evidence of reliance on these righteous people for the fulfilment of their needs and the relief of their pains and troubles. In its support, the Qur'ānic verse in which Allah is commanding the believers to associate themselves with the righteous, is quite sufficient and conclusive. Allah says:

---

1. Rāzī, *at-Tafsīr-ul-kabīr* (24:148).
2. Qur'ān (*al-Baqarah*) 2:130.

O believers! Fear Allah, and remain in (the company) of the truthful.[1]

In this verse, Allah, on the one hand, is instructing the believers in the uniqueness and immutability of His Power; on the other hand, He is enjoining upon them to adopt the company of the truthful in order to elevate themselves to a position which the truthful have already attained. At another place, Allah says:

And follow the path of the (person) who turned towards Us.[2]

Similarly, the prophet Yūsuf's prayer is also recorded in the holy Qur'ān:

Take my soul at death as a Muslim and unite me with the righteous.[3]

The holy Prophet (ﷺ) himself prayed to Allah using similar words.[4]

Some people might object to the authenticity of the tradition, picking out flaws in its chain of transmission or

---

1. Qur'ān (*at-Tawbah*) 9:119.
2. Qur'ān (*Luqmān*) 31:15.
3. Qur'ān (*Yūsuf*) 12:101.
4. Ahmad bin Hambal transmitted it in his *Musnad* (5:191); Hākim, *al-Mustadrak* (1:516); Tabarānī, *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (5:119,157 #4803,4932); and Haythamī in *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (10:113).

coming out with some other frivolous remarks, but no believer can deny the credibility of the prayer by Yūsuf (ﷺ) as it is recorded in the holy Qur'ān which is nothing but absolute truth. Thus it is established that it has been the practice of the prophets to mediate their supplications through the virtuous and the righteous. The recording of these forms of supplication in the Qur'ān is most probably intended to persuade the believers to follow the practice of the prophets.

Ibn-ul-Firāsī narrates that Fīrāsī said to the Prophet (ﷺ): O Messenger of Allah! Shall I beg you for something? He replied:

> *No, and if you can't help begging, then you should beseech the pious and the righteous (for help).*[1]

Some people believe that the supplication of the pious and the virtuous is granted during their lifetime, but after death they cannot help anyone, as they themselves are helpless. They believe that the righteous are a source of help but only during their earthly existence, and it is disbelief to rely on them for help after their death.

The supporters of this view are victims of a grave misunderstanding because the reality is just the reverse. It

---

1. Abū Dāwūd narrated it in his *Sunan*, b. of zakat (2:122#1646); Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, b. of zakat (5:95); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (4:334); Bukhārī, *at-Tārīkh-ul-kabīr* (7:138); Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (4:197); Ibn 'Abd-ul-Barr, *at-Tamhīd* (4:107); and 'Alā'-ud-Dīn 'Alī in *Kanz-ul-'ummāl* (6:502#16721).

is true as the green of the grass and the blue of the sky that Allah is the only source of blessing and no creature can arrogate this exclusively divine prerogative to himself. If he does so, he is committing unabashed disbelief. Therefore, to think that the prayer is mediated through one of His favourites in his life and He turns a cold shoulder to his prayer when he is dead smacks of a self-contradiction, as it tends to identify the saint with Allah as the source of help. The fact is that God Alone has the power to fulfil the needs of the creatures through the mediation of the saints whether they are dead or alive.

Those who object to making saints and the pious as means of help and assistance after death are obviously in the wrong groove. They are only fumbling in the dark and smashing their cluttered heads against the slippery walls of an unlighted tunnel which leads into an even darker dungeon. Their objections are grounded in the misconception that reliance on the saints and the pious for the acquisition of Allah's blessing is contingent on their manifest life while Allah's dispensing of His blessings to His creatures through the saints and the pious is absolutely unrelated to the fact of their being dead and alive. The traditions and the quotes of the Companions that follow are purported to eliminate the doubts raised by these objectors. A wide spectrum of evidence is marshalled to prove the fact that it is not only valid to rely on the saints and the pious for help after their death but it has also been the practice of the prophets and Allah's favourites. These are the people who can truly guide us and lead us to our salvation. Ibn Taymiyyah sums up the controversy at the end of his book *al-'Aqīdat-ul-wāsitiyyah*:

Ahl-us-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah are aligned to (cling to) the faith of Islam, guarding themselves gingerly against all forms of doctoring. This includes the truthful, the martyrs and the pious (according to their grades). It also includes the people who are the source of guidance and the minaret of light. These are the people who have achieved distinction on the basis of a consistently virtuous mode of living. The Substitutes and the Imams of dīn *also belong in this category who rallied the Muslims to (the path of) guidance. This is the group who received divine patronage to remain (truthful) and it was about this group that the holy Prophet (ﷺ) had said: "A group of my Community, who have been divinely guided to stick to the path of truth,*

> *will not cease to exist till the Day of Judgement, and those who oppose them or degrade them will never be able to do them any harm."*[1]

The second point revolves around the objection that the dead cannot be relied upon as means and they lack the capacity for help. This conclusion is also based on perverse reasoning. Allah Himself has referred to the purgatorial life of His favourites at various places in the Qur'ān. There is no difference of opinion among the followers of any ideology or religion about the life of the martyrs. What luxuries must grace the purgatorial life of the Prophet (ﷺ) whose most lowly follower is guaranteed not only life till the Day of Judgement if he dies a martyr but who also receives all the requisite divine blessings! Therefore, by regarding the Prophet (ﷺ) as a derivative helper, it is quite valid to seek his help and assistance after his death as it was valid during his earthly existence. Rather, his purgatorial life is as active and dynamic as his other life because his followers are sending salutations on him in a spirit of matchless devotion and angels have been appointed to convey these messages of sincerity and deep attachment to the Prophet. This symphony of sound and voice which his followers play every second and every minute is a living proof of the blessings Allah has conferred on him even in his purgatorial life.

If the acts of intercession, beseeching the Prophet's help and his mediation were acts of disbelief, then they should be indiscriminately pronounced as forms of

---

1. Muhammad Khalīl Harās, *Sharh al-'Aqīdat-ul-wāsitiyyah* (p.153).

disbelief everywhere; they should apply equally to his earthly existence, purgatorial life and his life in the Hereafter, because disbelief is condemned by Allah in every colour and hue. But the facts point in the opposite direction: Islamic teachings unambiguously reveal that the Companions relied on the Prophet's mediation at various occasions in their life and besought him for help and they will also seek his help and intercession even on the Day of Judgement and they will seek his means, and as a result of this reliance on his means and appeal for help, the Prophet (ﷺ) will reward his followers by interceding before Allah for their salvation. Thus, when it is valid during the earthly life and after-life of the Prophet (ﷺ) how can it be declared invalid and a form of disbelief during his purgatorial life?

Proof of purgatorial life

The teachings of Qur'ān and Sunnah prove the reality of life after death or life in the grave as clearly as they depict the reality of resurrection of the dead on the Day of Judgement. Allah says in the holy Qur'ān:

> *How can you reject the faith in Allah? Seeing that you were without life, (and) He gave you life; then He will cause you to die and will again bring you to life. Then again to Him will you return.*[1]

1. Qur'ān (*al-Baqarah*) 2:28.

The Qur'ānic verse makes an explicit reference to two kinds of death, two kinds of life and finally the return of all mankind to Allah on the Day of Judgement. In the light of the holy verse, the first kind of death was our state of non-existence when we had not stepped into the world of existence. The life that followed this state is our life on earth. Then death will overreach us and people will accordingly perform our funeral rites and bury us. The life that will follow is called the purgatorial life which is given to man in the grave or in his capacity as a dead person. The angels interrogate him and open a window in the grave leading either to Paradise or Hell. After the second life, we will be returned. Thus the purgatorial life spans the arrival of the angels in the grave for interrogation and the divine breath blown into the dead bodies for their resurrection.

This relates to the purgatorial life of an ordinary human being whether he is a believer or a non-believer. Now let us examine another verse about the life of the martyrs:

> *And say not of those who are slain in the way of Allah that they are dead, (they are not dead) but they are living though you are not conscious (of their life).*[1]

The same theme is expressed in different words:

1. Qur'ān (*al-Baqarah*) 2:154.

And those who are slain in the way of Allah, do not (even) think of them as dead. But they live in the presence of their Lord, they find their sustenance (in the blessings of Paradise).[1]

The followers of all religions believe in the life of the martyrs. However, besides the Qur'ānic verses, a number of traditions draw our attention to the fact that there is life after death even for the non-believers and infidels and they are endowed with the capacity to respond to the words of the living. For example, after the battle of Badr, the Prophet (ﷺ) himself called the slain infidels by their names and asked them:

Surely, we found the promise of our Lord absolutely true. (O infidels and non-believers!) Did you also find the promise of your lord true?

At this juncture 'Umar bin al-Khattāb said to the Prophet (ﷺ): "O Prophet! You are addressing bodies which have no soul in them." To make it clear, the Prophet (ﷺ) addressed the Companions:

I swear by the Power Who has in His control the life of Muhammad! The words I

---

1. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-'Imrān*) 3:169.

> *am speaking to these (infidels and non-believers), they far excel you in their power to listen to them.*[1]

This agreed-upon tradition attests not only to the purgatorial life after death of the infidels and non-believers, but it also attests to their power of listening which excels even that of the Companions.

Similarly, the Prophet (ﷺ) taught every person passing by a graveyard of the Muslims to address the residents of the grave by the particle "*Yā* (O)" and send salutations on them. This is the reason that Muslims teach their children to say *as-salāmu 'alaykum yā ahl-al-qubūr* (O residents of graves, peace be on you) whenever they pass by a graveyard.

When the life of the infidels and non-believers, the life of the ordinary believers, and the life of the martyrs and the saints have been confirmed by the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, how is it possible to deny the life of the prophets, particularly the life of the holy Prophet (ﷺ)? Especially, when he himself has repeatedly and explicitly declared:

---

1. Bukhārī narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *maghāzī* (military expeditions led by the Prophet) ch.7 (4:1461#3757); Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *jannah wa sifat na'īmihā wa ahlihā* (Paradise, attributes of its and natives) ch.17 (4:2203#2874); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (3:145; 4:29); Tabarānī, *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (5:96#4701); Baghawī, *Sharh-us-sunnah* (13:384#3779); Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (1:210); Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *Fath-ul-bārī* (7:301); & Haythamī in *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (6:90-1).

> *Allah has declared it forbidden for the earth to eat the bodies of the prophets. So the prophets are living and they regularly receive their sustenance.*[1]

This *sahīh* (sound) tradition conclusively proves that the absolute and incomparable power of Allah keeps the prophets alive in their graves. Another tradition records that the affairs of the Ummah are regularly presented to the Prophet (ﷺ) who expresses his gratitude to Allah for their good deeds and prays for His forgiveness for their misdeeds. The words of the tradition are as follows:

> *Your deeds are presented to me. If they are good, I express my gratitude to Allah,*

1. Ibn Mājah narrated this *sahīh* (sound) hadith in his *Sunan*, b. of *janā'iz* (funerals) ch.65 (1:524#1636-7), b. of *iqāmat-us-salāt was-sunnah fīhā* (establishing prayer and its sunnahs) ch.79 (1:345#1085); Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, b. of *salāt* (prayer) 1:275#1047); Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, b. of *jumu'ah* (Friday prayer) 3:92; Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (4:8); Ibn Hibbān, *as-Sahīh* (3:191#910); Dārimī, *Sunan* (1:307#1580); Ibn Khuzaymah, *as-Sahīh* (3:118#1733); Ibn Abū Shaybah, *al-Musannaf* (2:516); Hākim, *al-Mustadrak* (1:278); Tabarānī, *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (1:217#589); and Bayhaqī in *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (3:249).

and if the deeds are not good, then I pray to Allah for your forgiveness.[1]

The Lord, who has the power to give life and sustenance to the whole mankind both in this world and the

---

1. Haythamī transmitted it in *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (9:24) and said that that tradition had been reported by Bazzār (in his *Musnad*) and its sub-narrators are all of *sahīh* (sound) hadith. 'Irāqī has confirmed the soundness of its transmission in his book *Tarh-ut-tathrīb fī sharh-it-taqrīb* (3:297). Ibn Sa'd has recorded it in *at-Tabaqāt-ul-kubrā* (2:194). Qādī 'Iyād has inscribed this tradition in *ash-Shifā* (1:19); and Suyūtī, recording it in *al-Khasā'is-ul-kubrā* (2:281) and *Manāhil-us-sifā fī takhrīj ahādīth ash-Shifā* (p.3), has commented that Ibn Abū Usāmah in his *Musnad* has reproduced it through Bakr bin 'Abdullāh Muzanī and Bazzār in his *Musnad* who have relied on its narration by 'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd with a sound chain of transmission. It has been endorsed by Khafājī and Mullā 'Alī Qārī in their commentaries on *ash-Shifā,* i.e. *Nasīm-ur-riyād* (1:102) and *Sharh ash-Shifā* (1:36) respectively. Hadith-scholar Ibn-ul-Jawzī has reproduced it in *al-Wafā bi-ahwāl-il-mustafā* (2:809-10) from Bakr bin 'Abdullāh and Anas bin Mālik. Subkī has copied this tradition in *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (p.34) from Bakr bin 'Abdullāh Muzanī, and Ibn 'Abd-ul-Hādī in *as-Sārim-ul-munkī* (p.266-7) has authenticated its veracity. Bazzār's tradition has also been recorded by Ibn Kathīr in *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (4:257). Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī narrated it through Bakr bin 'Abdullāh Muzanī in *al-Matālib-ul-'āliyah* (4:22-3#3853). 'Alā'-ud-Dīn 'Alī copied Ibn Sa'd's tradition in *Kanz-ul-'ummāl* (11:407#31903) and from Hārith (#31904). Nabhānī related it in *Hujjatullāh 'alal-'ālamīn fī mu'jazāt sayyid-il-mursalīn* (p.713).

Hereafter, also has the power to keep the prophets alive in the graves and give them sustenance. The unnatural and unscientific Greek philosophical discussions, which have percolated into Islamic literature, are no match to the natural and immutable principles of Islam. The injunctions of Islam clearly explain different kinds of life and the modes of addressing people in their purgatorial life and declare categorically that the prophets, martyrs, saints and ordinary Muslims, even infidels and non-believers, are alive in their graves. As far as the martyrs are concerned, the Qur'ān itself is a witness that they regularly receive their sustenance. Therefore, those who acknowledge intermediation and appeal for help in the earthly existence as valid but treat it as invalid, even as a form of disbelief after death should remember that death is the taste of a moment, which passes away. According to Iqbāl, death is "a message of awakening behind the smokescreen of dream."

Purgatorial life is a midway house between the earthly life and the life after death, which will be conferred on people on the Day of Judgement. Just as it is valid to beseech the help of a person during his earthly life and during his life after death and to rely on his means, it is also an equally valid act to beseech his help and to rely on his means in his purgatorial life. This does not border on disbelief, because in all the three kinds of life, earthly, eternal and purgatorial, Allah is the real Helper and the creature whose help is being sought or is relied upon as means is the derivative helper. This is in consonance with the Islamic teaching and does not even remotely smack of disbelief. To treat the creature as the real helper in all the

three categories of life is tantamount to disbelief. It should be noted that the cause of disbelief is not located in the categories of life but in the division of real and derivative.

The life and capacity of the soul

After a logical and categorical proof of the reality of the purgatorial life of human soul, it is sheer irrational stubbornness to deny the reality of intermediation and seeking help from others after their death. To beseech help and assistance from the souls of the prophets and the saints or to rely upon their means is as justified as to seek help from living persons or the angels or to rely upon their means. When we seek help from a living being we are, in fact, seeking help from his soul. The human body is the dressing of the real man – soul. After death, when the soul is liberated from the material constraints of the body and, on account of its freedom from impurities of the flesh, then, like the angels, even more than them, it has the power to perform non-material acts. The soul is independent of the rules and regulations of the phenomenal world because her world – the world of command – is different from the cause-and-effect world of the body. Allah highlights this reality in the holy Qur'ān:

> *And these (infidels) ask you questions about the soul. Tell them that the soul is by the command of my Lord.*[1]

---

1. Qur'ān (*al-Isrā'*) 17:85.

The souls are blessed with a greater capacity of action and performance in their purgatorial life than they had enjoyed in conjunction with their bodies. They live in the world of command and can come more easily to the assistance of those who implore them for help. It may be noted that the prophets and the saints pray to Allah for the petitioners, and in response to their supplication, Allah fulfils the need of the concerned person. It is just like an adult person praying for a child or a brother praying for his brother. The problem is that those who deny life to the residents of the graves believe that the dead are not in a position to pray. But the true Islamic belief is that they are alive and recognize their visitors in proportion to their consciousness and understanding. The soul's awareness grows even more acute after it has been separated from the body, and by jettisoning its physical inhibitions, it is made even more powerful.

Another way to understand the meaning of intermediation and seeking help from others is that the power for Whom mediation is sought or whose help is being sought is Allah Himself. But the petitioner says that he covets Allah's help through the mediation of the holy Prophet (ﷺ) for the fulfilment of his need. He implores Allah through His favourites. He says to Allah: I am from among the favourites of these saints, therefore, show special mercy to me as I am very close to them and love them immensely. Thus Allah condones his sins for the sake of the holy prophets and also on account of his close association with the saints and fulfils his need.

The people who gather to offer the funeral prayer of a person pray for his forgiveness by Allah on a similar basis.

They, in fact, serve as a means of forgiveness for the dead person and also act as his helpers.

The dead as a source of benefit for the living

The final shot fired by these deniers of intermediation through the saints and the pious is that the dead cannot benefit the living because they lack the power even to shoo away a fly sitting on their body. How is it possible that a dead person, shorn of physical power, can help the living and that the living turn to him for help?

This hypothetical objection is actually based on their unawareness of the Prophet's traditions and teachings of the religious leaders. As we have already explained, the people who die and leave this worldly life, do not in fact die, but enter another life (purgatorial life). Though they are dead in our eyes, they are not actually dead, only their mode of life has changed as they have been transferred from one kind of existence to another kind of existence.

This can be explained by another example. Suppose there are two tubelights in a room. One of them is white and the other is blue. The light of the white tube is spreading all around while the blue tube is off. Now what will happen if the off-button of the white tube is pressed and precisely at that moment the on-button of the blue tube is also pressed? The room is the same, all the things in it are in their proper place, its doors, windows and curtains, etc., are also intact, but there is a change in the inner ambience of the room, that is, in the earlier state, everything appeared in the white light in its original colour,

and now everything in the room appears to wear a different complexion on account of the colour radiated by the blue tube. Now the question is: Has the colour of everything in the room really changed? Has the material composition of the objects changed? The answer is in the negative. Every object is present in its original state. The difference lies only in our perception. The same applies to the dead people. When the light of their worldly life is put out, we think they are dead, while, in reality, the tubelight of their purgatorial life is put on. Just as the saints and the pious are relied upon during their earthly life – while the real source of help is Allah – similarly, they can be relied upon as a means of help to fulfil our needs and to seek the nearness of Allah even when they have left this material world.

Suyūtī has copied in his book *Sharh-us-sudūr bi-sharh hāl-il-mawtā wal-qubūr* (pp.257-9) fifteen traditions bearing on this theme, and furnishing a proof of the reality of purgatorial life, he has affirmed that the dead can benefit the living.

Ibn-ul-Qayyim has written an exhaustive book on "the soul" which is the most authentic book on this subject. At one place he has reported from 'Abdullāh bin Mubārak that Abū Ayyūb al-Ansārī said:

The deeds of the living are presented to the dead. If they see virtuous (deeds), they are pleased and rejoiced, and if they see

> *(evil) deeds, they say: O Allah! Return them.*[1]

Narrating another tradition, Ibn-ul-Qayyim writes:

"'Ibād bin 'Ibād called on Ibrāhīm bin Sālih and at that time Ibrāhīm bin Sālih was the ruler of Palestine. 'Ibād bin 'Ibād said to him: give me some advice. Ibrāhīm bin Sālih said:

> *What should I advise you? May God make you a pious man! I have received the news that the deeds of the living are presented to their dead relatives. Now you just reflect on your deeds which are presented to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).*

After relating this, Ibrāhīm bin Sālih cried so bitterly that his beard became wet.[2]

In addition, there are many other traditions which prove that the deeds of the living are presented to the dead. Therefore, people, who are the victims of doubt, should study them to correct their faith which, according to Ibn Taymiyyah, is the faith of Ahl-us-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah as has already been explained, which leads one to the straight path and brings one increasingly closer to the pleasure of the Lord. Exclusive reliance on reason can prove disastrous

1. Ibn-ul-Qayyim, *Kitāb-ur-rūh* (p.13).
2. Ibn-ul-Qayyim, *Kitāb-ur-rūh* (p.13).

as reason is a deceptive chameleon and puts on a variety of guises to deceive its own followers; it is totally undependable and those who rely on it for true enlightenment, can never be blessed with guidance as misguidance is their destiny. According to Iqbāl:

> *"Move beyond reason because this light"*
> *"Is only the candle on the way; it is not the destination."*

SECTION ONE

Intermediation through the pious

1. Mediation of pious parents

Allah says:

And their father was a pious (person).[1]

The backdrop of the episode narrated in this verse is that Mūsā (عليه السلام) and Khadir (عليه السلام) stayed at a village. The natives played host to them. When they left there, they saw the wall of two orphan brothers caving in which harboured their treasure under it. Khadir (عليه السلام) reconstructed the wall without any recompense. Mahmūd Ālūsī relates that Khadir (عليه السلام) performed this act because their father was a pious person. The obvious conclusion is that Allah saved them on account of the mediation of their parents and some interpreters say that the pious father belonged in the fifth generation while others place him in the seventh generation.

1. Qur'ān (*al-Kahf*) 18:82.

We come to learn from this verse that honouring the children of the pious persons, regardless of the worth of their personal deeds, and only on the basis of their lineage, was the practice of the saints and the prophets. The question arises here that in the present-day world why should we respect the children of the pious when they themselves are more inclined towards evil than good? It is true that, according to the Qur'ān, the criterion of human excellence is piety, but if sense of personal achievement or individual worth has value, one's genealogy or family links should also be considered valuable. Therefore, they are being rewarded for the piety of their father. This was also the practice of the saints and the prophets. Now suppose the children are expelled from the fold of Islam on account of some evil act (may God forbid), then they, according to the reservation expressed in Qur'ān: *"Surely, he is not included among your family members,"*[1] do not fall within the area of this qualification, like the son of Nūh (عليه السلام) as well as Yazīd. Since the reservation applies to Yazīd, he does not deserve any respect or regard.

2. 'Abbās as a means of help

This is about famine and drought, which had taken a heavy toll of cattle. The people, led by 'Abbās, offered the prayer for rain.

1. Qur'ān (*Hūd*) 11:46.

The meaning of 'Umar's intermediation through 'Abbās

It is reported from Anas that when 'Umar prayed for help through the mediation of 'Abbās bin 'Abd-ul-Muttalib during the time of famine, he said:

> *O Allah, we used to offer to You the mediation of the holy Prophet (ﷺ) and You saturated us with rain, and now we rely on the mediation of the Prophet's uncle, so saturate us with rain (through his mediation).*[1]

Anas relates that they were saturated, that is, it rained which put an end to drought.

Similarly, 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar narrates that, during the year of famine, 'Umar bin al-Khattāb prayed to Allah for rain through the mediation of 'Abbās bin 'Abd-ul-Muttalib. Then he addressed the people:

---

1. Bukhārī narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *istisqā'* (to invoke Allah for rain at the time of drought) ch.3 (1:342-3#964), b. of *fadā'il-us-sahābah* (virtues of the Companions) ch.11 (3:1360#3507); Ibn Hibbān, *as-Sahīh* (7:110-1#2861); Ibn Khuzaymah, *as-Sahīh* (2:337-8#1421); Ibn 'Abd-ul-Barr, *al-Istī'āb fī ma'rifat-il-ashāb* (3:97); Bayhaqī, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (3:352), *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (6:147); Baghawī, *Sharh-us-sunnah* (4:409#1165); Subkī, *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (p.128); Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *Fath-ul-bārī* (2:494); and Zurqānī in his *Commentary* (11:152).

> *O people, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) treated 'Abbās in the same way as a child treats his father (that is, the Prophet (ﷺ) treated 'Abbās as his father). He deeply respected him and fulfilled the promises made by him. O people, you should also follow the Prophet (ﷺ) in the case of 'Abbās and offer him to Allah as a means of help and support so that He sends rain on you.*[1]

Then 'Abbās prayed in these words:

> *O Allah, calamity (and trouble) comes as a result of sin and only penitence lifts this calamity, and the people, on account of my relation with Your Prophet (ﷺ), have*

---

1. Hākim transmitted it in his *al-Mustadrak* (3:334); Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *Fath-ul-bārī* (2:497); Qastallānī, *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (4:277); and Zurqānī in his *Commentary* (11:152).

offered me to You as a means of seeking Your help, and these hands of ours, besmeared in sins, are before You and our foreheads are bowed down with penitence. So give us rain.[1]

We learn from the narrations that when 'Abbās offered the prayer, soon after it, the clouds rolled up from behind the hills and spread over the sky and the land was filled with rain. The people rejoiced, and touching the body of 'Abbās as a mark of respect, they said: O beloved of the two sacred places of Makkah and Medina, we congratulate you. And 'Umar bin al-Khattāb added on this occasion:

By God! This is what mediation is in the court of Allah and this is what the 'exalted status' means.[2]

Subkī comments:

And, similarly, this (episode) justifies the act of intermediation through the pious creatures of Allah, and this is an act which

---

1. Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī narrated it in *Fath-ul-bārī* (2:497); Subkī, *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (p.128); Qastallānī, *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (4:277); and Zurqānī in his *Commentary* (11:152).
2. Related by Ibn 'Abd-ul-Barr in *al-Istī'āb fī ma'rifat-il-ashāb* (3:98).

> *the Muslims have never denied. But only one of the Muslim sects (inventors of the new faith) has (denied intermediation).*[1]

Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī writes in the context of this tradition:

> *The episode involving 'Abbās makes it clear that to seek intercession from the virtuous, the pious and members of the Prophet's family is a desirable act. In addition, this event proves the high status of 'Abbās as well as reveals 'Umar's respect for him and the acknowledgement of his status.*[2]

Those who exploit this tradition as a negation of intermediation through the Prophet (ﷺ) after his death suffer from a misapprehension because when intermediation was sought through 'Abbās, it was the time of prayer. That is, 'Umar, being the caliph, pushed 'Abbās forward, instead of himself leading the prayer. During his earthly existence, the Prophet (ﷺ) himself led the prayers, and the master leading the prayer served as an act

1. Subkī, *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* (p.128).
2. Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *Fath-ul-bārī* (2:497); and Zurqānī also copied in his *Commentary* (11:152).

of mediation for the Companions. Now, when the Prophet (ﷺ) himself was not physically present among them, 'Umar requested his uncle to stand in his place and through his mediation prayed for rain. Therefore, their objections is automatically cancelled out. It might have sounded credible if there were some other prayer instead of the prayer for rain as at this occasion the Prophet (ﷺ) was not supposed to lead the prayer himself.

The blessing of the Prophet's family

Being the caliph, 'Umar was supposed to lead the people in the prayer for rain. This was what the protocol demanded and this was what the people expected. But he deliberately, as a token of respect for the holy Prophet (ﷺ) and his family, sacrificed the worldly protocol for spiritual protocol and this should be the hallmark of all true believers who prefer collective gain to personal benefit so he gave precedence to 'Abbās over himself so that through his means he could come even closer to the holy Prophet (ﷺ). He also prompted the people to persuade 'Abbās to lead the prayer. The motive behind the move was twofold; first, to further add to the dignity of the Prophet's family and, second, to expedite the acceptance of the prayer. He himself had led the prayers at this spot because, during his lifetime, this had been the practice of the Prophet (ﷺ) himself and what could be more precious for 'Umar than to continue the practice of the Prophet (ﷺ). Besides, the episode transparently revealed the respect and honour these people extended to the Prophet (ﷺ) and his family. Each step 'Umar took and each measure he adopted, was

expressly designed to promote the honour of the family of the Prophet (ﷺ).

'Umar also expressed this attitude in his own prayer: 'O Allah, we in our prayer to You used to rely on the mediation of the Prophet (ﷺ), and You blessed us with the rain. Now we rely on the mediation of his uncle, therefore, bless us with rain.' That is, during the life of the holy Prophet (ﷺ), we relied on his mediation. Like this, he took the people out, led them in prayer and then prayed to You. Now all this is not possible on account of his death, and we give precedence to the members of his family so that our prayer is accepted by You without delay.

The prayer for rain is offered at the juncture of famine and drought. If we reflect on the tradition deeply, we will discover that 'Umar is laying greater stress on the act of mediation than on the act of supplication. He is not saying: O people, cry your hearts out, shower Allah with your implorings and He will bless you with rain. Not once did he say that. All his hope is focused on the act of mediation and the act of supplication is pushed into the background. After 'Abbās had led the prayer, 'Umar also asked him to supplicate before Allah and he prayed: O Allah! This nation, on account of my blood link with the Prophet (ﷺ), has asked me to lead them in prayer. That is, he presented to Allah the mediation of the holy Prophet (ﷺ). Therefore, his act of leading the prayer actually established the act of intermediation through the Prophet (ﷺ).

It will be incorrect to infer from the words of 'Umar that he relied on the mediation of 'Abbās and not on that of the Prophet (ﷺ) because 'Abbās was alive while the Prophet (ﷺ) was dead. The point to be noted is that he

relied on 'Abbās's mediation on account of his close link with the Prophet (ﷺ) as is clearly reflected in his own supplication. Therefore, it is clear that he is actually depending on the Prophet's mediation.

Those who believe in intermediation through the living and deny it after death and accuse Muslims of disbelief on account of their reliance on intermediation after death are, in fact, themselves misdirected. If intermediation is disbelief, then it applies equally to the dead and the living as no one believes that it is valid to acknowledge not-God as God during his life and invalid after his death. This discriminatory attitude is a reflection of their perverse mentality and is in conflict with the spirit of true faith.

3. Command for supplication through the mediation of Uways Qaranī

The holy Prophet (ﷺ), being the greatest well-wisher of his Ummah, has opened many avenues for its betterment and devised a number of means to facilitate this process. One of the means prescribed by him is the act of supplication through the saints and the righteous. The statements made by him in different contexts imply that he himself had commanded his followers to supplicate through the righteous as he persuaded a person of 'Umar's stature to have his supplication mediated through Uways Qaranī who was one of the Prophet's closest proxy associates. He belonged to Yemen and could not attain the stature of the Prophet's Companion as he could not spare any time from tending his old mother and call personally on the Prophet (ﷺ). The Prophet (ﷺ) also loved his devotee deeply.

He gave the glad tidings of his Ummah's salvation through his supplication and said to 'Umar that, if possible, he should persuade him to supplicate for his redemption. His statement has been narrated by Usayr bin Jābir:

The residents of Kufa called on 'Umar in the form of a delegation. One of the delegates was a person who used to have fun with Uways. 'Umar asked: Is there anyone of you who comes from Qaran? That person came forward. 'Umar said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had said: "A person from Yemen will come to you. His name will be Uways. In Yemen, there will be no one else besides his mother. He was suffering from leprosy. He supplicated to Allah and Allah removed all the spots except a white spot of the size of a dinar or a dirham. If anyone of

> *you comes across him, you should ask him to pray for your redemption."*[1]

Again, another tradition makes reference to Uways Qaranī. The Prophet (ﷺ) said to 'Umar:

> *If he swears by God and says something, Allah will keep his word. If you can persuade him to supplicate for your salvation, you must get it done.*[2]

Then, according to the Prophet's prediction, a number of Muslims came from Yemen to take part in the jihad. One of them was Uways Qaranī and 'Umar asked him to pray for him.[3]

The conclusion to be drawn from the Prophet's statement is that he himself commanded his followers to depend on the mediation of the righteous and the pious.

---

1. Muslim narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *fadā'il-us-sahābah* (virtues of the Companions) ch.55 (4:1968#2542); Hākim, *al-Mustadrak* (3:403); Abū Nu'aym, *Hilyat-ul-awliyā' wa tabaqāt-ul-asfiyā'* (2:79-80); and Ibn 'Asākir in his *Tahdhīb tārīkh Dimashq al-kabīr* generally known as *Tārīkh/Tahdhīb Ibn 'Asākir* (3:163).
2. Related by Muslim in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *fadā'il-sahābah* (virtues of the Companions) ch.55 (4:1969#2542).
3. Muslim narrated it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *fadā'il-us-sahābah* (virtues of the Companions) ch.55 (4:1968#2542); Hākim, *al-Mustadrak* (3:403-4); Abū Nu'aym, *Hilyat-ul-awliyā' wa tabaqāt-ul-asfiyā'* (2:80); and Ibn 'Asākir in his *Tahdhīb tārīkh Dimashq al-kabīr* generally known as *Tārīkh/Tahdhīb Ibn 'Asākir* (3:163).

The master for whom the whole universe was created, who was ordained as the Prophet to introduce us to the religion of truth, who is Allah's most beloved creature, whose office is the recitation of the Qur'ānic verses, he himself is saying: ask my servant Uways to pray for your redemption. We know that Allah is even closer to us than our main artery, He listens to our supplications but in spite of all this, he is saying: ask Uways Qaranī to pray for you. Therefore, it is now quite transparent that to pray through the mediation of the pious and the righteous is compatible with the will of the Lord and His Messenger (ﷺ) and this is what constitutes the essence of faith and religion.

4. Victory through the Companions and the Successors

Abū Sa'īd Khudrī has reported a tradition that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> *A time will come that groups of people will come and fight a battle. It will be said: Is anyone among you a Companion of the Prophet (ﷺ)? It will be said yes and then victory will be achieved. Then a time will come that it will be said: Is there anyone*

> *among you who was in the company of the Prophet's Companions? It will be said yes and victory will be achieved. Then a time will come and it will be said: Is there anyone among you who was in the company of the Successors of the Prophet's Companions, it will be said yes and then victory will be achieved.*[1]

This tradition is authenticated by a sound chain of transmission, and besides Bukhārī, it has also been reported by Abū Ya'lā with proper certification through Jābir in his *Musnad* (4:132#2182). Haythamī has narrated it in *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (10:18) and has confirmed its authenticity.

This sound tradition establishes the validity of intermediation through the pious and the righteous.

5. Stalling of punishment through the mediation of the Substitutes

Shurayh bin 'Ubayd narrates:

---

1. Related by Bukhārī in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of jihad, ch.75 (3:1061#2740), b. of *manāqib* (merits) ch.22 (3:1316#3399), b. of *fadā'il-us-sahābah* (virtues of the Companions) ch.1 (3:1335#3449).

> *A reference was made to the natives of Syria in the presence of 'Alī. At that time he was in Iraq. People said: O leader of the faithful, send your curse on Syrians. He said: No, I heard the holy Prophet (ﷺ) say that there will be forty Substitutes in Syria. Whenever one of them dies Allah replaces him by another Substitute: on account of them, the natives of Syria are saturated with rain and they have victory over their enemies through the mediation of these Substitutes and the curse is lifted from the natives of Syria through their mediation.*[1]

Haythamī says that the narrators of this tradition are *sahīh* (sound) except Shurayh bin 'Ubayd who is *thiqah* (trustworthy).

6. Fulfilment of people's needs through the mediation of the righteous

It is narrated by 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

1. Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (1:112); Haythamī, *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (10:62).

> *There is no doubt that there are some of Allah's creatures that He has especially designated them for the fulfilment of the people's needs. People, in a state of nervousness, take their needs to them and these are the special creatures of Allah who are immune to His punishment.*[1]

7. Intermediation through Allah's favourites in the jungle

'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd has narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> *When you lose your means of transport in a jungle, you should call: O creatures of Allah! Help me, recover my transport! O creatures of Allah! Help me, recover my transport! There are many of Allah's creatures on this earth. They will help you recover it.*[2]

1. Haythamī narrated it in *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (8:92).
2. Tabarānī narrated it in *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabīr* (10:217#10518); Abū Ya'lā, *Musnad* (9:177); Ibn-us-Sunnī, *'Amal-ul-yawm wal-laylah* (p.162#502); Haythamī, *Majma'-uz-zawā'id* (10:132); and Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī in *al-Matālib-ul-'āliyah* (3:239#3375).

Mahmūd Sa‘īd Mamdūh writes in *Raf‘-ul-minārah* (p.225):

“The tradition, being narrated from different quarters, transformed itself from a weak tradition into a sound one which the Muslims have invariably followed.”

8. Subsistence through the blessing of the weak and the decrepit

Mus‘ab bin Sa‘d has narrated that the holy Prophet (ﷺ) said to Sa‘d:

> *It is on account of the weak that you are blessed with victory and provided subsistence.*[1]

Summary

We have relied on a few narrations from a vast treasury of traditions to find out that intermediation through the pious and the saints is an established fact, which has continued uninterrupted from the early days to the present. No argument can disprove the reality of this sound practice.

1. Related by Bukhārī in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of jihad, ch.75 (3:1061#2739).

SECTION TWO

Intermediation through the relics of the pious

1. Intermediation through Ibrāhīm's site

Just as intermediation is permitted through Allah's favourites, similarly it is allowed through the articles and objects associated with them. For instance, intermediation through Ibrāhīm's footprints is recorded in the holy Qur'ān in these words:

> *And (it was commanded that) you should make the site on which Ibrāhīm stood into a place of worship.*[1]

Prayer is offered to Allah no matter where it is offered. In this Qur'ānic verse the believers are exhorted to turn the footprints of Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) into 'a place of worship' because this site is more suitable for prayer which clearly

1. Qur'ān (*al-Baqarah*) 2:125.

establishes the proof of intermediation through the footprints of Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام).

Ibrāhīm's site

The stone on which Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) stood during the construction of Ka'bah is called Ibrāhīm's site (*maqām Ibrāhīm*). This is the sacred stone which etched on itself his footprints and is still preserved in a bronze gauze in front of the door of Ka'bah. Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) had completed the construction of Ka'bah walls while standing on it. The stone moved around the Ka'bah in any direction Ibrāhīm needed it. So, on account of its association with His Prophet (عليه السلام), Allah has especially impressed upon the believers to turn this spot into a place of worship.

It proves that the places and sites associated with any favoured creature of Allah are elevated to a stature of respect and dignity. On account of this association, people receive blessings from it and it becomes a source of mediation for the acceptance of their prayers by Allah.

2. Relics of the saints as a means of life

Sāmirī made a calf of gold and put into its mouth the dust from the feet of Jibrīl's horse. Mūsā (عليه السلام) felt outraged by this sight and asked Sāmirī:

> *O Sāmirī! (Tell me) what is the matter with you.*[1]

---

1. Qur'ān (*Tā-Hā*) 20:95.

Sāmirī said:

> *I saw something which those people had not seen. So I took a fistful (of dust) from the footprints (of the angel who had come to you).*[1]

It is explained in books of exegesis that Jibrīl (عليه السلام) had come to Mūsā (عليه السلام) in the desert of Sinai on a horseback. Wherever the horse stamped its feet, grass sprouted from the sandy and dry earth. When Sāmirī saw Jibrīl (عليه السلام), he at once understood that he was one of Allah's favourites. His feet were so exceptional that wherever they touched the dry earth, greenery sprang up from that spot. That is why he preserved some of this earth and when after making the calf he put it into its mouth, it started speaking.

It proves that the relics of Allah's favourites are a means of life. That earth served as a means of the calf's power of speech which made him articulate.

3. Consensus of exegetes on acquisition of blessing and on intermediation through the relics of the saints

Allah says:

1. Qur'ān (*Tā-Hā*) 20:96.

> *And their prophet said to them: The sign of his kingdom (being from Allah) is that you will receive a chest. In it there will be things for your peace of mind, and relics* (tabarrukāt) *left over by the children of Mūsā and Hārūn. The angels will be carrying it and if you are believers, then surely there is a big sign for you.*[1]

It may be made clear that we have taken over the word *tabarrukāt* (relics) from Shāh Walī Allah Muhaddith Dihlawī and its details are found almost in all books of exegesis. For instance, *Ma'ālim-ut-tanzīl, Tafsīr-ul-Jalālayn, at-Tafsīr-ul-kabīr, al-Jāmi' li-ahkām-il-Qur'ān, Rūh-ul-bayān, Rūh-ul-ma'ānī, Lubāb-ut-ta'wīl fī ma'ānī at-tanzīl, al-Madārik, at-Tafsīr-ul-mazharī* etc., may be looked through for further information. Here, we will focus on three famous books of exegesis to drive home the relevant point:

1. *Khazā'in-ul-'irfān fī tafsīr-il-Qur'ān*

Mawlānā Na'īm-ud-Dīn Murādābādī has given a very comprehensive description of the coffin. We have reproduced it from *Khazā'in-ul-'irfān fī tafsīr-il-Qur'ān*:

"This chest was made of the boxwood and carved in gold. It was three hands in length and two hands in width and Allah had descended it on Adam (عليه السلام). It contained the

1. Qur'ān (*al-Baqarah*) 2:248.

pictures of all the prophets and at the end it contained a picture of the holy Prophet (ﷺ) inside a red ruby. The Prophet (ﷺ) is in a state of prayer and he is surrounded by his Companions. Adam (عليه السلام) had a look at all the pictures. By inheritance, this chest passed down to Mūsā (عليه السلام). He kept the Old Testament in it. So it also contained fragments of the Old Testament tablets as well as Mūsā's staff and his clothes and sandals, Harūn's turban and his staff and a little bit of manna which soothed the hearts of Banī Israel. After him, this coffin was inherited by Banī Israel. Whenever they were in trouble, they placed the coffin in front of them and offered supplications for success which was invariably granted. Owing to its blessing, they achieved victory over their enemies. But when Banī Israel grew morally corrupt, Allah thrust 'Amāliqah upon them. He snatched away the coffin from them and put it at a dirty and dungy place. On account of defiling it and other acts of sacrilege, he suffered from a variety of diseases. Five of his settlements were razed to the ground and they were convinced the destruction was caused because they had dishonoured the coffin. Thus they placed it in an ox-driven cart, and released the oxen. The angels brought it to Tālūt in the sight of Banī Israel. The coffin proved to be a symbol to the Bani Israel for Tālūt's kingship. On seeing this, Banī Israel acquiesced in his kingship."

This shows that it is obligatory on us to honour and esteem the relics of our elders. Supplications are granted and needs are fulfilled on account of their blessing and their desecration causes the destruction of the misdirected people. The pictures in the coffin had not been made by any man but had come from Allah.

2. *Tafsīr Mājidī*

An extract taken by Mawlānā ‘Abd-ul-Mājid Daryābādī from *Tafsīr Mājidī* is given below:

“The technical name of this special chest is *tābūt sakīnah*. This was the most important cultural and national heritage of Banī Israel. It contained the original manuscript of the Old Testament as well as the relics of the prophets intact. Israelis considered it as the source of immense blessing and sanctity and treated it with great reverance. They kept it with them through war or peace, travel or rest and guarded it jealously. It was not very huge. According to the research of present-day Jewish religious scholars, its measurement was as follows:

length	2½ feet
width	1½ feet
height	1½ feet

“Banī Israel linked their entire fortune with it. A long time ago, the Palestinians had wrested it away from them. They considered it highly ominous and were impatient and jittery for its return. Since the time of its return to Tālūt, according to history, to the reign of Sulaymān (عليه السلام) it remained in the possession of Banī Israel and he placed it in the Sulaymānī Temple after its construction had been completed. After that, it is untraceable. The Jews generally believe that it is still buried in the foundations of the Sulaymānī Temple.

“Some followers of the straight path believe that the respect accorded to the manuscript of the Old Testament, the relics of Mūsā (عليه السلام) and Hārūn (عليه السلام) and those of their children as well as the saints is ultimately proved and

vindicated by the story of the coffin as it was the way of the prophets and the righteous."

3. *Bayān-ul-Qur'ān*

Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī writes in his exegesis *Bayān-ul-Qur'ān*:

"And these people requested the Prophet (عليه السلام) that they would be content if they could observe any visible sign that he had been sent to them as king from Allah. At that time, their Prophet (عليه السلام) said to them: the sign of his appointment as king by Allah is the chest that will come to you without your effort which contains an object of contentment and blessing from your Lord, that is, the Old Testament which is surely from Allah, and some left-over things which belong to Mūsā (عليه السلام) and Hārūn (عليه السلام), that is, some of their clothes etc. In short, the angels will bring the chest, and thus the arrival of the chest is a complete sign for you if you are believers. The chest contained the relics. And according to the verse it contained an original prescription for drawing blessing from the righteous."

The purpose of this elaborate description is that when Allah had conferred on Banī Israel, through the means of the relics of their prophets, temporary and eternal, visible and invisible benefits, and the Qur'ān is a witness to it and this is not self-deception or mere superstition as some people readily and uncritically seem to suggest – then why won't Allah confer these visible and invisible blessings on the followers of Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) on account of their deep love and devotion for him? Surely, their blessings will be countless and far more superior to the ones conferred on the

earlier communities. But it is unfortunate that we have developed only a speculative and intellectual relation with the Prophet (ﷺ), thus weakening our emotional and spiritual link with him.

But people who have developed an emotional and spiritual nexus with him are enjoying his blessings even today. It is a fact that some people cured their eye diseases by touching them with the sheets of paper on which his praise had been inscribed – and these were written during the time of the writer Sharf-ud-Dīn Būsīrī. Similarly, our elders have mentioned countless blessings flowing from the sample of the Prophet's sandals. Mawlānā Aswhraf 'Alī Thānwī has described with particular detail the blessings of the sample in his journal *Nayl-ush-shifā bi-ni'āl-il-Mustafā* as we have already explained.[1]

4. Evidence from tradition about receiving blessing from the relics of the saints and the prophets

It is narrated by 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar:

People in the company of the Prophet (ﷺ) got down at Hajar in Thamūd

1. see ch.5, section 4.

> *territory. They drank water from its wells and (also) kneaded the flour with it. Then the Prophet (ﷺ) commanded them to spill the water and feed the kneaded flour to the camels and said to them: Take the drinking water from the well visited by Sālih's she-camel.*[1]

5. Construction of mosques beside the tombs of the saints

Allah says:

> *They (the believers) said, those who had control over their affairs that we will build a mosque (at their door so that the Muslims should pray in it and draw a special blessing from their close association).*[2]

When the Companions of the Cave (*ashāb-ul-kahf*) woke up after 309 years, and then died naturally later, a difference of opinion developed among the people. Some of them expressed the opinion that the entrance of the cave should be closed down by building a wall around it and those, who were more influential, said that a mosque should be built near it so that Muslims could pray there and draw blessing from their close association. In this way, the memory of the Companions of Kahf will also remain fresh.

---

1. Related by Muslim in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *zuhd war-raqā'iq* (piety and softening of hearts) ch.1 (4:2286#2981).
2. Qur'ān (*al-Kahf*) 18:21.

Qāḍī Thanā'ullāh Pānī Patī has interpreted the verse in these words:

> *This Qur'ānic verse favourably argues that building a mosque near the tombs of the saints for drawing blessings from them so that Muslims could pray there, is quite valid.*[1]

Some people, discarding the misinterpretation of others whose sole purpose is to cast doubts in the minds of people, say:

> *And the meaning of this tradition – that they converted the graves of their prophets into mosques – is that they had started worshipping these graves as the same meaning is established through another tradition in which Abū Marthad al-Ghanawī quotes the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying: Don't*

1. Qāḍī Thanā'ullāh Pānī Patī, *at-Tafsīr-ul-mazharī* (6:23).

sit on the graves nor turn toward them while praying[1].[2]

The tombs of the saints – where Qur'ānic verses are recited round the clock and from where the faith-boosting voices remembering Allah issue in high-pitched accents – when a person, immersed in prayer and the concentration of effort it entails, submits his need to Allah, through the mediation of His Own saints, the Lord accepts the prayer processed through His favourites.

Who deserves the benefit through mediation?

In the earlier pages we have proved from the Qur'ān and the traditions with reference to the prophets, relics of the prophets as well as relics of the saints and the pious that intermediation through them is not only valid but is also compatible with the will and desire of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). This is our religious belief and any deflection from it for a believer is simply inconceivable. Now, winding up the debate we will prove with the help of the Qur'ān who deserves the benefit of the act of intermediation? In this context it may be kept in mind that both a believer and a non-believer benefit from mediation in proportion to their grades. It is said that not only human beings but the animals also benefit from the mediation of the saints. This is the reason that the dog of the

1. Related by Muslim in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *janā'iz* (funerals) ch.33 (2:668#972).
2. Qādī Thanā'ullāh Pānī Patī, *at-Tafsīr-ul-mazharī* (6:24).

Companions of the Cave benefited from them. Allah has mentioned it in the Qur'ān:

> *And their dog is (sitting) at (their) threshold, stretching forth his two forelegs.*[1]

The divine wisdom in keeping the Companions of the Cave alive for 309 years was to make them a symbol of Allah's might for the coming human generations. But even more amazing is the fact that, during the same period, the dog sat alive at their door through their blessing without eating or drinking anything. On account of being their dog, it remained alive for 309 years. If the dog had belonged to someone else, it would not have survived for even a short period and died without food and drink. Another point to note is that the dog did not even belong to them, it belonged to their baker. When they set out on their journey, it also set out with them and the Qur'ān has particularly stressed its steadfastness in keeping the company of these men. The question is that it is a natural canine posture, then what is so special about it that the Qur'ān has laid unusual emphasis on it. It is because the dog did not give up the company of the saints and the righteous and demonstrated its loyalty by remaining seated at the door. The company of these pious persons not only kept it alive for 309 years but also distinguished it from other dogs. It is on account of these saints that Allah has mentioned it in the Qur'ān along with them:

---

1. Qur'ān (*al-Kahf*) 18:18.

> *(Now) some people will say: (Companions of the Cave) were three, the fourth being their dog, and some will say they were five, the sixth being their dog, doubtfully guessing at the unknown, and some will say they were seven, the eighth being their dog.*[1]

In this verse, the dog is being mentioned along with the Companions of the Cave. The dog proved its loyalty and did not desert them. The dog's behaviour pleased Allah so much that He has bracketed it with the Companions of the Cave, that is, wherever He has mentioned them, He has also mentioned the dog.

In the Qur'ānic verse, the posture of the dog is also being stressed. We learn from this that if the dog cannot die before a specific time by adopting the company of the pious people of Allah and its reference is made in the Qur'ān, then how can a Muslim with correct faith be deprived of Allah's favour if he mediates his prayer for its immediate acceptance through one of Allah's prophets or saints or offers the mediation of some object associated with them or supplicates to Allah at a sacred spot or lives in the company of the saints and the pious, because Allah's favourite creatures are the divinely certified means to lead people to

---

1. Qur'ān (*al-Kahf*) 18:22.

the path of His pleasure and to interject in them the divine consciousness. It is, therefore, established as an incontrovertible fact that only a Muslim with correct faith is the real beneficiary of the rewards that accrue to him through the mediation of the saints and the pious people of Allah.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Religious Leaders who believe in Intermediation: their Experiences and Observations

It is an established fact that on account of the distinction Allah has conferred on His favourites and the blessings He has showered upon them, it has been the practice of our religious leaders and scholars to rely on them to resolve their worldly problems, attain salvation in the Hereafter, make their graves and tombs the focus of their supplications and seek help and assistance from the chosen people of Allah who are buried in them and seek their help for spiritual and inner benefits and blessings. These acts, which shaped the conduct and mode of living of the saints and the scholars in the past are now the granite foundation of the concepts and beliefs of Ahl-us-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah. Moreover, they had not moulded their attitudes and deeds on a superficial, unconscious or sentimental basis. A great deal of reflection and reasoning laced these modes of conduct and were framed by comprehensive experimentation, observation and practical orientation. Therefore, on the basis of investigation, and not mere sentiment, it can be affirmed that their statements were sound and authentic and on account of their immunity from doubt and ambiguity, they furnish a cogent argument for all those believers who are blessed with sufficient wisdom and intelligence to appraise the depth and truth of these statements.

Religious scholars, enlightened saints and our spiritual leaders have pronounced the tombs of these favourites of Allah as inexhaustible fountain-heads of light and blessing

where our supplications are acknowledged and robed as destinies. Reliance on these sanctified persons opens the shuttered avenues of success. Their attention and response unravels the tangles of the Hereafter and their spiritual help serves as a source of salvation for our worries and all forms of distress. To cap it all, their statements are consistent with the criterion of experience and observation, which is the basis of the modern inductive method of all scientific progress. Therefore, they cannot be brushed under the carpet as mere hearsay and deserve our positive response as they are grounded in facts and proved by experience.

This world is inhabited by two sets of people. The first set of people are those who are rebellious and disobedient, and on account of their law-breaking tendencies, they form a coterie of persons who are hell-bent to protect and promote the interests of the devil and are a cause of constant torture for Allah's creatures. On the other hand are those who are good-natured, pure, and well-behaved and with a positive outlook and are determined to promote the welfare of the people. Such noble persons and untainted souls form their own fraternity and come closer to one another through mutual interaction, following the axiomatic principle that "birds of a feather flock together." These courageous, highly determined and spiritually motivated people, through sheer hard work and concentration, leave behind indelible tales of sincerity and honesty, patience and steadfastness, love and sacrifice that the readers are simply stunned by their exceptional nature.

These holy personages have graced every period of human history. Outwardly, they live on the sidelines but they are easily placed on account of their habits and

manners, their character and mode of conversation. Their love and concern for the creatures of Allah is so gushing that it cannot be contained like the perfume of flowers. The chain of their blessing is continuous, because it goes against the divine grain that His creatures are deprived of the benefit and blessing of His chosen people in any era of human history. Therefore, these favoured servants of Allah are not only a source of blessing for the people in their manifest life but also benefit them after death; rather their blessings acquire greater frequency and intensity when they are transferred to another mode of existence after leaving this phenomenal world. They bless the seekers of their help as effectively as they did during their earthly sojourn. The one who seeks their help instinctively knows that he has been helped by them. In the context of intermediation and help, we propose to cast a cursory glance at the conduct, experiences and observations of these righteous people who have provided glimmers of light and guidance to the creatures of Allah groping in the amorphous shades of darkness and depression.

Ideas and beliefs of religious leaders

1. Imam Zayn-ul-'Ābidīn

Imam Zayn-ul-'Ābidīn supplicates to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) for help and intercession in these words:

O mercy of the worlds! You are the intercessor for the sinners.

On account of your infinite generosity, mercy and magnanimity, intercede for us on the Day of Judgement.

O, who has come to all the worlds as a source of mercy! Help Zayn-ul-'Ābidīn.

Who is confined by the party of the oppressors (and beseeches your help).

2. Imam Mālik

Imam Mālik's prominence as one of the four jurists of Islam is well-established. Once caliph Abū Ja'far Mansūr visited Medina and he asked Imam Mālik: "While supplicating, should I turn my face to the prayer niche [and turn my back to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ)] or should I turn my face to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) (and turn my back to the prayer niche)?" On this interrogation, Imam Mālik replied: "(O caliph!) Why do you turn your face from the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), as he is the source of mediation for you and for your ancestor Adam (عليه السلام) on the Day of Judgement? Rather you should (pray and supplicate by) turning towards the Prophet (ﷺ) and seek his intercession so that he intercedes for you before Allah on the Day of Judgement. Allah has declared:

> *(O beloved!) And if they had come to you, when they had wronged their souls, and asked forgiveness of Allah, and the Messenger also had asked forgiveness for them, they (on the basis of this means and intercession) would have surely found Allah the Granter of repentance, exteremely Merciful.*[1]

This incident has been narrated by Qādī 'Iyād in his *ash-Shifā* (2:596) with a sound chain of transmission. Besides, it has been related by a number of other traditionists of impeccable credibility. Subkī in *Shifā'-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām*, Samhūdī in *Khulāsat-ul-wafā*, Qastallānī in *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah*, Ibn Jamā'ah in *Hidāyat-us-sālik* and Ibn Hajar Haythamī in *al-Jawhar-ul-munazzam*.

3. Imam Qurtubī

He has mentioned intermediation in the interpretation of the verse 64 of surah *an-Nisā'* in his *al-Jāmi' li-ahkām-il-Qur'ān* (5:265-6).[2]

4. Imam Hākim

In his book *al-Mustadrak* (2:615) he has mentioned the tradition relating to Adam's intermediation through the holy Prophet (ﷺ) and has pronounced it as sound.[1]

1. Qur'ān (*an-Nisā'*) 4:64.
2. see p. 212.

5. Imam Bayhaqī

He has related in his book *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (5:489) the tradition in which Adam (عليه السلام) relied on the mediation of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). He has painstakingly avoided reference to any disconfirmed (*mawdū'*) tradition in his book.[2]

Imam Bayhaqī in his book *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah* (6:166-7), has also recorded a tradition attributed to 'Uthmān bin Hunayf.[3] In addition, in the same book (p.147) and in *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā* (3:352) he has also narrated the incident of 'Umar bin al-Khattāb seeking 'Abbās's mediation for rain.[4]

6. Qādī 'Iyād

He has, in his book, *ash-Shifā* (1:227-8) narrated Adam's intermediation through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) with the help of sound and famous traditions.[5] In addition, in the chapters on 'visiting the Prophet's grave,' 'virtues and merits of the Prophet (ﷺ)' and in many other chapters in his book he has referred to the qualities and attributes of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

7. Imam Nawawī

Imam Nawawī in the sixth chapter of his book *al-Īdāh* has mentioned the issue of intermediation.[6] Besides, he has

1. see p. 147.
2. see p. 148.
3. see p. 180.
4. see p. 325.
5. see pp. 150-1.
6. see p. 213.

recorded in *al-Adhkār* a number of supplications which prove the reality of intermediation.[1]

8. Imam Ibn Taymiyyah

Ibn Taymiyyah in his book *Qā'idah jalīlah fit-tawassul wal-wasīlah*, commenting on the Qur'ānic verse:

> *O believers! Fear Allah and seek means (of approach to) His (presence and to His nearness and accessibility).*[2]

writes:

"Offering mediation in the court of Allah springs from one's faith in the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and in his obedience. And it is by virtue of this obedience and faith that it is obligatory for every believer under any circumstances, outwardly or inwardly, during and after the Prophet's life, and during his presence or absence. Once this condition is laid down, it cannot be voluntarily discontinued by any person on any excuse or pretext. And the only way to escape the divine wrath and punishment is to make the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) a means of salvation by obeying him and by reposing his trust in him, because the Prophet (ﷺ) is the owner of the highest station of distinction in Paradise and he is the intercessor for his followers and the former and the latter ones will envy his position. His stature is the highest in the court of Allah and he is the greatest among the intercessors. Allah has declared about Mūsā (عليه السلام):

1. see p. 212.
2. Qur'ān (*al-Mā'idah*) 5:35.

And with Allah, he was highly dignified (and respectable).[1]

And about ʻĪsā (عليه السلام) Allah has declared:

He will enjoy respect and status (both) in this world and the Hereafter.[2]

"While the Holy Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) is blessed with the highest distinction among the prophets, his supplication and intercession will benefit only the person for whom he will pray and intercede. When he prays and intercedes for a person, he will make his prayer and intercession a source of mediation in the presence of Allah, as was the practice of the Companions."[3]

Once he was questioned whether it was valid or invalid to depend on the mediation of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), he replied:

"All praise for Allah! By the consensus of the Muslims it is quite valid and proper to rely on the means of faith in the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), his obedience, his remembrance, his supplication and intercession, similarly his deeds and the deeds of his followers, which they have performed in obedience to the Prophet's commands. And the Companions used to depend on his mediation during his life on earth and after his death, they depended on the

---

1. Qur'ān (*al-Ahzāb*) 33:69.
2. Qur'ān (*Āl-i-ʻImrān*) 3:45.
3. Ibn Taymiyyah, *Qāʻidah jalīlah fit-tawassul wal-wasīlah* (pp.5-6).

mediation of his uncle, ‘Abbās as they used to rely on his mediation during his earthly life.”[1]

9. Subkī

He has discussed at length the question of intermediation in his book *Shifā’-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām* and has proved its relevance as a vibrant concept in Islam, as we have mentioned at different places in the course of the book.

10. Imam Ibn Kathīr

Imam Ibn Kathīr has commented on verse 64 of surah *an-Nisā’* in his book *Tafsīr-ul-Qur’ān al-‘azīm* (1:519-20) and raised the issue of intermediation. He has not levelled any objection against ‘Utbī’s tradition in which a Bedouin supplicates at the Prophet’s tomb for his intercession.[2] In his book *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (1:131; 2:291-2) he has related the event of Adam’s reliance on the Prophet’s mediation and expressed no reservations about the tradition.[3] Imam Ibn Kathīr has related in *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (5:167) the episode of the man who visits the Prophet’s grave and prays for rain through his means and he has pronounced this tradition quite sound.[4] In addition, he has also related in the same book (5:30) that during the

1. Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmū‘ fatāwā* (1:140).
2. see p. 208.
3. see p. 148.
4. see p. 230.

battle of Yamāmah, the battle-cry of the Muslims was *yā Muhammadāh* (O Muhammad! Help us).[1]

11. Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī

He has in his books *al-Isābah fī tamyīz-is-sahābah* (3:484) and *Fath-ul-bārī* (2:495-6) narrated the incident of the man who visited the Prophet's grave for rain through his mediation.[2]

12. 'Abd-ur-Rahmān Jāmī

He enjoys enviable reputation in the fields of poetry, mysticism, philosophy and tradition. Besides, his burning and yearning love for the Prophet (ﷺ) bubbles up in his verses. He expresses his faith in intermediation in these words:

> *It was the manifestation of the blessing of the Prophet's name that Adam (عليه السلام) received pardon and Nūh was saved from the devastating impact of the tempest.*

13. Suyūtī

He has related the tradition of Adam's intermediation in *ad-Durr-ul-manthūr* (1:58) and *al-Khasā'is-ul-kubrā* (1:6) in addition to narrating it in *ar-Riyād-ul-anīqah fī sharh*

1. see p. 32.
2. see p. 230.

asmā' khayr-il-khalīqah where he spells out its soundness by endorsing the view expressed by Bayhaqī.[1]

14. Qastallānī

The qualities and accomplishments of a special group of saints are recorded in the traditions. The blessing of their supplication causes rain and brings victory and triumph to the Muslims. Qastallānī's views about them are given below:

> *When ordinary people fall into trouble, first of all, the Heralds supplicate for them, then turn by turn the Nobility, Substitutes, the righteous and the ministers (supplicate for them). If their supplication is granted, well and good, otherwise, the saint of the highest rank,* ghawth *(who is all the time engrossed in Allah's worship,) supplicates for them, and before he winds it up, his prayer is granted. (This is Allah's special blessing on them.)*[2]

---

1. see p. 151.
2. Qastallānī, *al-Māwāhib-ul-laduniyyah* (2:726); Zurqānī, *Commentary* (7:487).

Qastallānī has also mentioned intermediation in the beginning of *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah*.[1]

15. Ibn Hajar Haythamī

Ahmad Shihāb-ud-Dīn Ibn Hajar Haythamī Makkī, who possesses an eminent position among experts on Islamic jurisprudence and tradition, has proved on the basis of the experience and observation narrated by Abū 'Abdullāh Qurayshī that Allah's favourites help people after death as they help them during life and the value of their benefit is not in the least reduced. Produced below is an incident attributed to Abū 'Abdullāh Qurayshī:

A severe drought had enveloped Egypt in its grip and the people's distress caused by hunger and thirst remained unrelieved inspite of their prayers and supplications:

> *So I journeyed towards Syria, when I reached near Allah's friend (Ibrāhīm's) tomb, he met me on the way. I said to him: 'O Messenger of Allah! I have come as a guest. You should show your hospitality in the form of a supplication for the natives of*

1. see p. 149.

> *Egypt.' He prayed for them, so Allah drove their famine away from them.*[1]

In this extraordinary reference, the description of the face-to-face meeting with Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) has been commented upon by Imam Yāfi'ī in these words:

> *The statement made by Abū 'Abdullāh Qurayshī that he had a face-to-face meeting with the Friend is based on truth. Only an ignorant person can deny it who is unaware of the mode of living and status of the saints because these people observe the earth and the heavens and see the prophets in their living condition.*[2]

In addition, Ibn Hajar Haythamī has penned down a special treatise *al-Jawhar-ul-munazzam* on the theme of intermediation. On its page 61, he has spelled out intermediation through the holy Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) as a fair (*hasan*) act.

16. Nūr-ud-Dīn Qārī

He is generally known as Mullā 'Alī Qārī. He has discussed this issue in his book *Sharh ash-Shifā*.

1. Ibn Hajar Haythamī, *al-Fatāwā al-hadīthiyyah* (pp.255-6).
2. Ibn Hajar Haythamī, *al-Fatāwā al-hadīthiyyah* (p.256).

17. Ahmad Shihāb-ud-Dīn Khafājī

Khafājī has justified intermediation in *Nasīm-ur-riyād*, an exegesis of *ash-Shifā*.

18. Muhammad bin 'Abd-ul-Bāqī Zurqānī

He has proved the relevance of this issue in his *Commentary* (1:118-20; 12:220-3).[1]

19. Muhammad bin 'Alī Shawkānī

Shawkānī has expressed the relevance of intermediation through the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in his book *Tuhfat-udh-dhākirīn* (p.195).[2]

20. Ibn 'Ābidīn Shāmī

The reputation of Ibn 'Ābidīn Shāmī as an eminent religious scholar has spread far and wide. His intellectual subtlety and juristic expertise have added many extra feathers to his illustrious cap. His intellectual and investigative masterpiece *Radd-ul-muhtār 'alā Durr-il-mukhtār* provides food for thought even today for scholars in the form of its hefty volumes and reveals his analytical vision. A number of traditions relate that when he decided to take up the burden of such a stupendous work, which amounts to enclosing an ocean within a teapot, he, instead of relying on his invaluable intellectual ability and subtlety, prayed to Allah through the mediation of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). His mode of presentation was as follows:

---

1. see p. 149.
2. see p. 179.

> *And I beg Allah through the means of His exalted Prophet (ﷺ), His high-ranking obedient servants, and especially the truthful Imam A'zam (Abū Hanīfah) that he should ease my problem by His kindness and enable me to complete it.*[1]

This form of supplication proved so effective and the blessing of mediation gave him such power that he composed the record-breaking book on Islamic law. It is so authentic and so well-documented that no other book has excelled it in repute and popularity.

The encouraging factor in this context is that it is an exegesis of the book called *Durr-ul-mukhtār* and before he started writing the book, he had written its holy pages relating to Jibrīl (عليه السلام) after he received permission from the Prophet (ﷺ) which Ibn 'Ādidīn Shāmī has mentioned in these words:

> *And the exegete had clearly received the Prophet's permission either in the form of an inspiration or a dream. It was by virtue*

1. Ibn 'Ābidīn Shāmī, *Radd-ul-muhtār 'alā Durr-il-mukhtār* (1:3).

of the Prophet's blessing that this exegesis edged out the interpretations of others.[1]

If we reflect on the backdrop of these events, we will find that it is more a product of faith than labour, obedience than hardwork.

21. Mahmūd Ālūsī

Commenting on the earlier verses of surah *an-Nāzi'āt*, he explains in these words the justification of reliance on Allah's favourites and seeking help and support from them:

1. Ibn 'Ābidīn Shāmī, *Radd-ul-muhtār 'alā Durr-il-mukhtār* (1:9).

It is said: In the introductory sentences of this surah, the separation of the souls of pious persons from their bodies at the time of death is described and Allah has sworn by these different states of the souls. These souls have to be wrenched out of the bodies because, on account of their long and deep association with their bodies, they are disinclined to leave them. The reason for this disinclination is that, in order to earn virtues, the body acts as a means of transport, and it is on this count that there is a greater possibility of adding to the score of one's virtues. Then these souls fly to the world of angels and reach the sanctuary of purity, and on account of their force and nobility, they blend with the elements that help decide the destinies of the creatures, that is, they are included among the angels, or they acquire administrative capability. That is why it is said: 'when you are invaded by troubles, you should seek help from the residents of the tombs, that is, from the favourites of Allah who are embodiments of virtue and purity, and those who have left us.' There is no doubt that a person who visits their tombs, receives spiritual help by virtue of their blessings, and on many occasions, the knots of difficulties unwind

through the mediation of honour and reverence they enjoy.[1]

He adds:

It is also said that in these sentences Allah has sworn by these good-natured people, who step into the field of virtue and sanctity and try to purify both the inner and the outer self through worship, persistent practice and a concerted confrontation with the evil and, as a result, are permeated with immediate divine consciousness. (These sentences may be applied to these holy persons in the sense that) they control their own instinctive cravings and concentrate all their energies on the world where holiness prevails, and finally achieve perfection after passing through the evolutionary phases so that they can guide those who are stuck up in their flawed schedules and invest their lives with a sense of purpose and direction.[2]

1. Mahmūd Ālūsī, *Rūh-ul-ma'ānī* (30:27-8).
2. Mahmūd Ālūsī, *Rūh-ul-ma'ānī* (30:28).

22. Shāh 'Abd-ul-Haqq Muhaddith Dihlawī

Shāh 'Abd-ul-Haqq Muhaddith Dihlawī comments in his exegesis of Shaykh 'Abd-ul-Qādir Jīlānī's book *Futūh-ul-ghayb* that when the saints cross into the area of divine knowledge and consciousness, which is immune to the exigencies of mortality, they are blessed with a special power which enables them to perform acts unmediated through external causes, and they are transformed into embodiments of exceptional light and cognizance as they have arrived from the mortal world into the the world of immortality. In this way they achieve that level of perfection which the common believers will receive in Paradise.

23. Muhammad Zāhid Kawtharī

In his *Maqālāt*, he has dilated upon the theme of intermediation and proved its practice and efficacy by refuting the objections of those who are opposed to it. In his view, intermediation through the prophets and saints during their lives and after their death is not only valid but dates back to the days of early Muslims whose integrity was inviolate and whose understanding of the faith was unquestionable.

24. Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī

Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī, commenting on the blessings of the holy Prophet (ﷺ) in his book *Nashr-ut-tīb*, writes: It was transparently reflected from the foreheads of his ancestors. It was his universal light that persuaded Allah to accept Adam's repentance; again it was his light that

salvaged Nūh (عليه السلام) from the tempestuous waves and transformed the glowing coals of fire into the blossoms of flowers for Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام).

The panegyric that his uncle ‘Abbās composed in his praise has some of the verses as follows:

And you were with Allah’s Friend when he faced the ordeal of the fire.
How could your light in his back burn him out?
And when you were born,
The earth was lighted up and the cosmos turned into a place of radiance.
So we in this light
And illumination are passing through the way of guidance.

The holy Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) listened to these verses by ‘Abbās with rapt attention and expressed his appreciation instantly. If they were grounded in mere fantasy, he would have stalled him in his tracks. Since he did not do so, it proves that he was in agreement with the substance of the

verses and therefore, this is a form of tradition which is embodied in the form of address or delivery.

Besides, Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī, has named the thirty-eighth part of his book as "intermediation through the Prophet (ﷺ) at the time of supplication." In this part, after mentioning a tradition attributed to 'Uthmān bin Hunayf, he writes: "It proves that just as intermediation through someone's supplication is valid, similarly, reliance on someone in the supplication for intermediation is also valid." When during the period of 'Uthmān bin 'Affān, 'Uthmān bin Hunayf asked a petitioner to utter the same supplication which the Prophet (ﷺ) has taught to the blind Companion, Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī makes it the basis of establishing the validity of intermediation after death. In addition, he has proved the relevance of intermediation through someone other than a prophet (عليه السلام) by 'Umar's intermediation through 'Abbās. Mawlānā Thānwī has also declared the act of intermediation through the Prophet's grave during the time of 'Ā'ishah as valid. Finally, after reproducing 'Utbī's tradition in which a bedouin had called on the Prophet's grave for the repentance of his sins, as we have explained in reference to the 64th verse of surah *an-Nisā'* in the 3rd section of chapter five, he writes: "As it happened in the early days, and there is no contradiction of it, it has acquired the status of a proof."

25. Ahmad bin Zaynī Dahlān

A Makkan jurist of Muslim law, Ahmad bin Zaynī Dahlān in his journal *Fitnat-ul-Wahhābiyyah*, has established the

legality of intermediation, beseeching the prophets and saints for help and intercession, and he has cogently refuted the doubts and allegations of those who are opposed to these perfectly legal acts.

26. Muhammad bin ‘Alawī al-Mālikī

A well-known contemporary religious scholar posted at Makkah Muhammad bin ‘Alawī al-Mālikī in his book *Mafāhīm yajib an tusahhah* has conducted well-documented research on the concept of intermediation. In addition, in his book *Shifā’-ul-fu’ād bi-ziyārat khayr-il-‘ibād* he has proved the relevance of intermediation in a comprehensive manner.

27. Muhammad Hishām Kabbānī

He is a famous contemporary religious scholar and he has written a book comprising seven volumes *Encyclopedia of Islamic Doctrine* on the beliefs of Ahl-us-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah. In the fourth volume of his book he has justified the belief in intermediation on the basis of a vast array of historical and rational arguments.

28. Mahmūd Sa‘īd Mamdūh

He has compiled a book on the genesis and exegesis of a large number of traditions relating to the theme of intermediation. It is called *Raf‘-ul-minārah*. He has established the truth of intermediation by refuting the objections of its denigrators in reference to the sound traditions they have adduced against the relevance of intermediation.

Experiences and observations of the great saints

The secrets of the worlds of purgatory, angels and divinity are revealed to Allah's saints in a manner and style that is denied to the common run of people. Their opinion is authentic in all human and non-human fields of activity and it can neither be challenged nor any flaws found in its inherent cogency. Therefore, it is quite rational, and a recognition of human limitations, to believe in their opinions because their statements are not based on any inanity or triviality but have been derived through extra-ordinary observation and supported by the ballast of divine sanction, as no one can deny that "what is heard cannot equal what is seen."

Given below are some of the experiences of the great saints who have attaind Allah's pleasure through worship, concentration and exceptional deeds of piety and human services:

1. The tomb of Umm Harām bint Milhān

Umm Harām bint Milhān accompanied the Muslim army that invaded Cyprus. The Prophet (ﷺ) had predicted that she would participate in the naval war. It so happened that she fell down from a horse boarding a ship or just her foot slipped and she died as a martyr and she was buried at that spot and her blessings were revealed to the people. Her grave came to be known as the grave of a pious woman, and people supplicate at her grave, their supplications are

granted by Allah and people also supplicate for rain through her mediation.[1]

2. The tomb of Abū Ayyūb al-Ansārī

He was one of the great Companions. He took part in the battle of Constantinople. Near the enemy border he fell ill. As the illness grew worse, he dictated his will as follows:

> *When I die, take my dead body with you, when you line up against the enemy, bury me in your feet.*[2]

So, acting on his will, the Islamic soldiers buried him at the foot of the fort and warned the enemies that in case they tried to desecrate his grave, no church in the Islamic country would remain safe. Thus, even the enemies were forced to revere his grave, and people soon came to know the blessings emanating from the grave. Whatever they prayed for at the grave was immediately granted.

> *And Abū Ayyūb's grave lies near the ramparts of the fort and everybody knows it... When people pray for rain there, it starts raining.*[3]

---

1. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah* (5:235).
2. Ibn 'Abd-ul-Barr, *al-Istī'āb fī ma'rifat-il-ashāb* (1:404-5).
3. Ibn 'Abd-ul-Barr, *al-Istī'āb fī ma'rifat-il-ashāb* (1:405).

Mujāhid says:

> *Whenever there is famine, people expose the grave, so it starts raining.*[1]

3. Ibn Abū Hātim Rāzī

The famous traditionist Ibn Abū Hātim Rāzī has recorded his observation about the tomb of Imam 'Alī bin Mūsā Radā:

> *Whenever I was staying in the city of Tūs and had a problem, I called on the tomb of Imam 'Alī bin Mūsā Radā and prayed to Allah to solve that problem, the prayer was invariably granted and the problem was solved. And this is an experience I have had repeatedly.*[2]

4. Imam Shāfi'ī

Imam Shāfi'ī describes his own experience about the blessings of the tomb of Imam Abū Hanīfah:

---

1. Ibn 'Abd-ul-Barr, *al-Istī'āb fī ma'rifat-il-ashāb* (4:6).
2. Ibn Abū Hātim Rāzī, *Kitāb-uth-thiqāt*.

> *I derive blessing from the person of Imam Abū Hanīfah and I visit his grave everyday. When I face a problem, I offer two optional cycles of prayer and visit his grave and (while standing) I pray to Allah to solve my problem. And I have not even left the place that my problem is solved.*[1]

This was the statement and practice of such a great Imam whose status and scholarly stature had been acknowledged by the entire world of Islam. His conceptual and intellectual integrity was simply unassailable. When he himself is saying that visiting the tombs of Allah's favourites is a source of blessing, then there is hardly any justification for denying its credibility.

Shāh 'Abd-ul-Haqq Muhaddith Dihlawī has reproduced a statement by Imam Shāfi'ī in his book *Ashi''at-ul-lam'āt* (2:923):

"The lighted grave of Mūsā Kāzim is a patent antidote for the acceptance of prayer."

---

1. Khatīb Baghdādī has related the incident with a sound chain of transmission in his *Tārīkh Baghdād* (1:123); Ibn Hajar Haythamī, *al-Khayrāt-ul-hisān fī manāqib-il-imām al-a'zam Abū Hanīfah* (p.94); Muhammad Zāhid Kawtharī, *Maqālāt* (p.381); and Ibn 'Ābidīn Shāmī in *Radd-ul-muhtār 'alā Durr-il-mukhtār* (1:41).

It was Imam Shāfi'ī's practice that he called on the tombs, supplicated extensively and his supplications were accepted. From this he drew the correct inference that these places were patent or elixir for the acceptance of prayer. That is why he pronounced the tomb of Imam Mūsā Kāzim as a patent antidote.

5. Ibn-ul-Jawzī

In the biography of saints *Sifat-us-safwah* (2:266), he writes about Ibrāhīm bin Ishāq Harabī:

And his grave is open to everyone. People receive blessing from it.

He has also described Adam's intermediation through the holy Prophet (ﷺ) in the first chapter of his book *al-Wafā bi-ahwāl-il-Mustafā* (1:33).[1]

6. 'Abd-ul-Ghanī Maqdisī Hambalī

A swelling appeared on the upper side of his arm. He rubbed the affected part against the grave of Imam Ahmad bin Hambal and the swelling subsided.

Muhammad Zāhid Kawtharī says: "This incident is recorded in Diyā' Maqdisī Hamblī's book *al-Hikāyāt-ul-manthūrah* and I have seen it in his handwritten manuscript.[2]

---

1. see p. 149.
2. Muhammad Zāhid Kawtharī, *Maqālāt* (p.381).

7. Abū al-Qāsim Qushayrī

He is included among the great mystics and traditionists. In the third and fourth centuries he acted as a source of inspiration for scholars and intellectuals. He has described his personal experience of the famous saint Ma'rūf Karakhī in these words:

> *He was one of the eldest holy persons and his supplication was unexceptionally granted. Even now supplication is offered while standing by his grave for recovery from an illness. The natives of Baghdad say: Ma'rūf (Karakhī's) grave is patent medicine.*[1]

8. Mujaddid Alf Thānī

Mujaddid Alf Thānī mentions one of his own perplexities:

"I was involved in a problem but there seemed to be no way out. A considerable period of time elapsed but the problem refused to be solved. A worry constantly niggled me that I may not be held accountable for this lapse, therefore, I should try to get rid of it as soon as possible. I felt quite uncomfortable and I prayed to Allah repeatedly to help me out of this state of anxiety." His own words are as follows:

---

1. Abū al-Qāsim Qushayrī, *ar-Risālat-ul-qushayriyyah* (p.41); Khatīb Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* (1:122); Ibn-ul-Jawzī, *Sifat-us-safwah* (2:214).

> *By chance, I happened to pass by the tomb of a relative, and I also sought his help in this matter. Meanwhile Allah's blessing also helped me and the reality of the matter was unravelled, and the spiritual relation I have with the holy Prophet (ﷺ) stood me in good stead and consoled a sorrowful heart.*[1]

9. Shāh Walī Allah Muhaddith Dihlawī

He was one of those great saints who, on account of his God-given vision and divine knowledge, could see the inner reality with his naked eye and then proclaimed it publicly. He has written a matchless book *Fuyūd-ul-haramayn* based on observations. The gist of its ninth and tenth chapters is as follows. He says:

"We called at Medina, and we clearly saw with our own eyes the soul of the holy Prophet (ﷺ) and on that day this reality was revealed to us that the pure soul can also be

1. Majaddid Alf Thānī, *Maktūbāt Imam Rabbānī* (3:149#220).

seen like the body and the secret of the life of prophets after death was also disclosed to us.

"On the third day we called and sent salutations on the Prophet (ﷺ), and also visited the graves of Abū Bakr as-Siddīq and 'Umar Fārūq.

"Then we humbly submitted: we have called on you with great expectations to receive your mercy and blessing. Have mercy on us."

He adds:

> *The holy Prophet (ﷺ) expressed great joy and I felt that the sheet of his kindness had wrapped and covered me. Then he embraced me, and appeared before me, disclosed many secrets and personally informed me and briefly helped me and told me how I could seek his help for my needs.*

A brief summary

These are a few of the observations and experiences which span centuries of human existence. They clearly prove that the graves and tombs of the chosen people of Allah are a steady source of divine blessings and benefits for mankind. The discerning persons do not treat these spots of the saints as worthless or as mere heaps of mud and mortar; rather

they believe that they are men of distinction and Allah has specially rewarded them for their piety and human service. Some of these saints are looked upon as ultra-magnanimous. Therefore, no one should entertain any doubt or reservation about their purity and exceptional status.

A person, who himself is stripped of spiritual vision, has no right to misguide people about these favourites of Allah. He has no right to say that these people are dead, lying inert and lifeless in their graves, and therefore, lack the power and the energy to help anyone. His statement is completely baseless and is justified neither by historical precedent nor by rational argument.

An important point to be noted in this context is that only those residents of the tombs deserve our reverence who had attained access to the nearness and the pleasure of Allah and whose pious acts and virtuous deeds had made them popular during their lives. Only such persons are to be implored for help. This point has been clarified by Shāh ‘Abd-ul-‘Azīz Muhaddith Dihlawī in unmistakable terms. He says:

> *Help should be sought only from the famous saints.*

as the public opinion is the litmus test of the popularity or unpopularity of a saint. He has also prescribed a method for discovering the stature of a saint and for seeking help from him. This can be looked up in *Fatāwā ‘Azīzī*.

The Last Word

In the earlier pages we have established the reality of intermediation with cogent reasoning and solid evidence from the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. The evidence, and a rational interpretation of the evidence, clearly prove that intermediation is a correct, valid and legal way to attain access to Allah's favour and for the instant acceptance of our supplications. The evidence is mainly drawn from the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, which are the basic dependable sources of knowledge for the believers. Allah and His beloved Prophet (ﷺ) have commanded us to seek means of help and assistance. From the time of the Companions to the present-day, the Muslims collectively relied upon all the valid forms of intermediation, and to cap it all, the Companions themselves relied on the Prophet's mediation. He never discouraged them or told them at any occasion: 'you are indulging in innovation or disbelief on account of intermediation as it violates the basic principle of your faith.'

On the other hand, to suit their needs, he himself encouraged and persuaded them to rely on his mediation, as we have described the incident of the blind Companion in a tradition attributed to 'Uthmān bin Hunayf whose eyesight had instantly returned through the mediation of the holy Prophet (ﷺ) along with many other irrefutable examples.

It has been the cherished practice of the early believers, the Companions, the Successors and their Companions to rely on the intermediation through the holy Prophet (ﷺ) and the great Companions. If someone denies intermediation and tries to misinterpret the statements and

acts of the Prophet (ﷺ), he should keep in mind the Prophet's saying in which he had pronounced his Companions as the most honoured ones among the believers. He said:

> *The best people are those who are in my time, then the people who will come after them, (and) then the people who will come after them.*[1]

The tradition clearly indicates that the act of the Companions, Successors, and then their Companions, the early believers and the religious leaders is far more reliable, dependable and commendable than the act of those who deny the relevance of intermediation and cook up spurious explanations to refute its legality. Obviously, the denier, like the proverbial liar, has no legs, not even the crutches, to stand upon because props of sand are no substitute for the staves of ballast and concrete which derive their strength not only from correct faith but also from its equally sensible and rational interpretation.

It is also quite true that Allah is even closer to us than our main artery, and anyone who denies this reality in fact denies a Qur'ānic injunction. But, along with it, we should also concentrate on His Sunnah. If Allah had willed, He could have sent His Word and commands, unmediated and

1. Bukhārī related it in his *as-Sahīh*, b. of *shahādāt* (witnesses) ch.9 (2:938#2509), b. of *fadā'il-us-sahābah* (virtues of the Companions) ch.1 (3:1335#3451), b. of *riqāq* (softening of hearts) ch.7 (5:2362#6065); and Tirmidhī graded it *hasan* (fair) *sahīh* (sound) in his *al-Jāmi'-us-sahīh*, b. of *manāqib* (merits) ch.57 (5:695#3859).

unfiltered, but He has not opted for this course of action or mode of revelation. He chose His revered prophets as the carriers of His Message. This is the established divine practice. Then how is it possible to attain access to Him or win His pleasure by ignoring His practice, that is, without relying on the means of His prophets and messengers? Is it possible without them to act on His revealed commands in the way He desires us to act? If Allah had desired that His creatures should have direct access to Him and witness His blessings upfront, He would never have sent the honoured messengers and commanded the believers through the holy Qur'ān to seek means of help and support.

This can be illustrated by a simple example. Dams generate electricity but from there it cannot be directly supplied to houses and factories. If anyone tries to obtain electricity directly from a dam, he will be burnt into cinders. First of all, electricity is supplied to the grid stations from the power station and then it is supplied to different places in varying voltage with the help of a variety of transformers. People do not rely on this alone, but they use other gadgets, like stabilizers etc., to make its domestic and industrial supply as safe and secure as possible. All these precautions are taken to ensure regular supply and minimize risk.

When we cannot operate our domestic and electric outfits by obtaining electricity directly from the power station, how is it possible to draw Allah's blessings directly from Him. How is it possible for us sinners to have unveiled and unscreened access to the glory of Allah when His honoured Prophet Mūsā (عليه السلام) and his seventy Companions could not stand even a reflection of His

glimpse? Mūsā (عليه السلام) fell unconscious while his seventy Companions, overawed and overdazzled, collapsed dead as doornails on the spot, as it is revealed in the fifty-fifth verse of surah *al-Baqarah*. When His own chosen Psrophet (عليه السلام) fell unconscious by the sight of even the faintest reflection of His splendour and seventy of His Companions lost their lives, how is it possible for us creatures of sin and guilt of the fifteenth century to even dream about an access to His uncurtained glory?

Unfortunately, today, we have tailored religious injunctions to our nature and convenience. Whatever caters to our temperament and pampers our mood is faith; and whatever goes against our grain and is in conflict with our liking and inclination, even though it is established by sound traditions and the practice of the favourites of Allah, we throw it into the dustbin as a piece of discarded toast. This is sheer expediency and fundamentally incompatible with the universal principles of our faith. Therefore, the imperative need of the times is not to follow a calculus of compromise but to understand the essence of our faith, which is the faith of Ahl-us-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah, and follow its principles without any attempt at self-indulgence and self-gratification.

May Allah bless us with the power and ability to understand our faith correctly!

Glossary

Ādam (عليه السلام): name of the first Prophet of Allah, i.e. Adam.

Athar: pl. *āthār*. lit. relating. Generally used for a hadith related by one of the Companions, as distinguished from one of the Prophet's own.

da'īf: an inaccurate narration which does not qualify to be either *sahīh* (sound) or *hasan* (fair), and hence cannot be used as a basis of an Islamic opinion.

dīn: it is an Arabic word for religion. It is more specificially used for the religion and revealed books of the prophets and the messengers. It is a comprehensive term covering not only religious rites and rituals but also applies to all aspects of life and provides guidance in all of its pursuits, while *madhab* (religion) is restricted to man's spiritual life and regulates its relationship with God alone.

dinar: an ancient gold coin.

dirham: a silver coin weighing 50 grains of barley with cut ends. It equals to one-twelfth of *ūqiyah* (128 grams) of gold in value.

du'ā': lit. to call someone; making supplication to Allah.

Fajr: dawn or early morning before sunrise; morning prayer.

gharīb: a hadith or version reported by one reliable or unreliable narrator which differs in context with another hadith or version reported by a group of reliable narrators. A *gharīb* hadith can be *sahīh* (sound) or *da'īf* (weak).

ghawth: lit. one to whom we can cry for help. A mediator; a title given to a saint of the highest order.

hadith: pl. hadiths. The sayings, practice and approved traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

hāfiz: lit. a guardian or protector. (1) one of the names of God, al-Hāfiz. (2) a governor, guardian of the Makkan temple. (3) one who has committed the whole of the Qur'ān to memory. (4) one who has committed 1 lakh hadiths to memory.

hajj: the yearly pilgrimage of the Muslims to Makkah.

Hārūn (عليه السلام): the prophet Aaron.

hasan: a hadith, narrated by a reliable chain of transmission though not approaching the grade of *sahīh* (sound) hadith, but records a complete chain of narrators up to the Prophet (ﷺ).

Imam: one who leads people in prayers; an eminent Islamic scholar.

'Īsā (عليه السلام): name of Allah's penultimate messenger, Jesus.

Isrāfīl: name of an angel of high rank.

istighāthah: to ask someone for help.

Jibrīl (عليه السلام): the archangel Gabriel who brought the revelations of Allah to His messengers.

jihad: the word jihad, in terms of the acquisition of a desirable and commendable objective, carries a number of meanings. Jihad is striving against the evils of the self, and it is also the struggle waged for the propagation of Islam and the integrity of Ummah. For example, to launch jihad through tongue and pen for the improvement and development of the Islamic society; an armed struggle against the exploitive forces is also jihad but this is 'minor jihad' while a perpetual struggle against the evil wishes of one's self is 'major jihad'. Jihad is one of the cardinal articles of Islam.

Ka'bah: a cube-shaped building at the centre of al-Masjid-ul-Harām (the great mosque at Makkah) towards which all Muslims face in prayer. It is also known as the House of Allah.

kawthar: lit. abundance. A pond in Paradise.

lahd: the hollow made in the grave on the Ka'bah side, in which the corpse is placed.

maqām Ibrāhīm: the place at Makkah within the boundary of al-Masjid-ul-Harām, to have the impression of the footprints of the Prophet Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام). There is a stone on which Ibrāhīm (عليه السلام) stood while he and his son, the Prophet Ismā'īl (عليه السلام), were building the Ka'bah.

Maryam: the Prophet 'Īsā's mother; Mary.

mawdū': a *mawdū'* tradition narrated by a liar, a narrator whose act of lying in relating traditions has been proved.

Mīkā'īl: name of an angel, Micheal.

mu'adhdhin: one who gives the *adhān*, the call to prayer, loudly calling people to come and perform the prayer.

Mūsā (عليه السلام): the prophet Moses.

nawāfil: pl. of *nafl*, a voluntary act; a work of supererogation.

Nūh (عليه السلام): the prophet Noah.

Rabb: one of the names of Allah; Sustainer.

sahīh: sound. A hadith with an unbroken chain of narrators ranging from the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) and approaching an era through reliable narrators without being *shādh* (odd) or *mu'allal* (faulty) in between the two cross relaters.

Sālih (عليه السلام): the prophet Salih.

Shariah: lit. road. It is a legal modality of a people based on the revelation of their prophet/messenger. The last Shariah is that of Islam that abrogates all previous shariahs.

Sunnah: pl. sunnahs. lit. the path, way or a form, the customary practice of a person or a group of people. It has come to refer almost exclusively to the legal way or ways, orders, statements and acts of worship, etc., of the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) which have become the models to be followed by the Muslims.

surah: a chapter of the holy Qur'ān. There are 114 chapters in the holy Qur'ān.

taqwā: lit. it means abstinence; piety. In its technical sense, it means to abstain from dubious acts for Allah's pleasure and for fear of His displeasure.

'Uzayr (عليه السلام): name of the prophet Ezra.

Ya'qūb (عليه السلام): the prophet Jacob.

Yūsuf (عليه السلام): name of the prophet Joseph.

Zakariyyā (عليه السلام): Arabic name of the prophet Zachariya.

zakat: a yearly fixed percentage of wealth and property of the Muslims liable to zakat to be paid to the poor and the needy of the Muslim Community. It is obligatory, as it is one of the five indispensable pillars of Islam.

Bibliography

1. *The Holy Qur'ān,* revealed by Almighty Allah.

'Abdullāh bin Muhammad bin Siddīq al-Ghumārī

2. *Irghām-ul-mubtadī al-ghabī bi-jawāz-it-tawwasul bi an-nabī.*

'Abdullāh bin Muslim bin Qutaybah, Abū Muhammad (213-276/828-889)

3. *Tafsīr gharīb-il-Qur'ān*, Peshawar, Pakistan: Maktabah tawhīd wa sunnah, 1398/1978.

'Abd-ul-Mājid Daryābādī

4. *Tafsīr Mājidī.*

'Abd-ur-Razzāq, Abū bakr, San'ānī (126-211/744-826)

5. *al-Musannaf*, Karachi, Pakistan: al-Majlis-ul-'ilmī, 1st ed. 1390/1970.

Abū 'Awānah, Ya'qūb bin Ishāq (230-316/845-928)

6. *Musnad*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-ma'rifah, n.d.

Abū Dāwūd, Sulaymān bin Ash'ath (202-275/817-889)

7. *Sunan*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ihyā'-it-turāth-il-'arabī, n.d.

Abū Dāwūd Tayālisī, Sulaymān (133-204/751-819)

8. *Musnad*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-ma'rifah, n.d.

Abū al-Fadl al-Mībadī, Rashīd-ud-Dīn

9. *Kashf-ul-asrār wa 'uddat-ul-abrār*, Tehran, Iran: Mu'assisah intishārāt amīr kabīr, 4th ed. 1361.

Abū al-Faraj bin Qudāmah, 'Abd-ur-Rahmān bin Muhammad (597-682/1200-1283)

10. *ash-Sharh-ul-kabīr*.

Abū Mansūr, Ahmad bin Sabbāgh (d.494/1101)

11. *al-Hikāyāt-ul-mashhūrah*.

Abū Nu‘aym, Ahmad bin ‘Abdullāh Asbahānī (336-430/948-1038)

12. *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah*, Hyderabad, India: Majlis dā'irah ma‘ārif ‘Uthmāniyyah, 1369 AH.

13. *Hilyat-ul-awliyā' wa tabaqāt-ul-asfiyā'*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kitāb-il-‘arabī, 3rd ed. 1400/1980.

Abū al-Qāsim Qushayrī, ‘Abd-ul-Karam bin Hawāzin (376-465/986-1073)

14. *ar-Risālat-ul-qushayriyyah*, Iran: Intishārāt Bedār, 1374 AH.

Abū Sa‘ūd ‘Amādī, Muhammad bin Muhammad (898-982/1493-1574)

15. *Irshād-ul-‘aql-is-salīm ilā mazāyā al-Qur'ān al-karīm*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ihyā'-it-turāth-il-‘arabī, n.d.

Abū Ya‘lā, Ahmad bin ‘Alī (210-307/825-919)

16. *Musnad*, Damascus, Syria: Dār-ul-ma'mūn lit-turāth, 1st ed. 1404/1984.

Abū Ya‘lā Khalīl bin ‘Abdullāh Khalīlī Qazwīnī (d.446/1055)

17. *Kitāb-ul-irshād fī ma‘rifat ‘ulamā'-il-hadith*, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Maktabat-ur-rushd, 1989 AD.

Ahmad bin Hambal, Ibn Muhammad (164-241/780-855)

18. *Musnad*, Beirut, Lebanon: al-Maktab-ul-Islamī, 2nd ed. 1398/1978.

Ahmad bin Zaynī Dahlān (d.1304/1886-87)

19. *Fitnat-ul-Wahhābiyyah*, Istanbul, Turkey: Maktabah īshīq, 1398 AH.

Ahmad Radā Khān (1272-1340/1856-1921)

20. *Hadā'iq bakhshish*, Lahore, Pakistan: Kamyāb dār-ut-tablīgh, n.d.

Ahmad as-Sāwī al-Mālikī, Ibn Muhammad (1175-1241/1761-1825)

21. *Hāshiyah on Tafsīr-ul-Jalālayn*, Cairo, Egypt: Matba'at-ul-istiqāmah, 1375/1956.

Ājurrī, Abū Bakr Muhammad bin Husayn (d.360/970)

22. *ash-Sharī'ah*, Lahore, Pakistan: Ansār-us-sunnat-il-Muhammadiyyah, n.d.

'Alā'-ud-Dīn 'Alī al-Hindī (d.975AH)

23. *Kanz-ul-'ummāl*, Beirut, Lebanon: Mu'assisat-ur-risālah, 2nd ed. 1407/1986.

Albānī, Muhammad Nāsir-ud-Dīn (1333-1420/1914-1999)

24. *Silsilat-ul-ahādīth-is-sahīhah*, Beirut, Lebanon: al-Maktab-ul-Islamī, 4th ed. 1405/1985.

25. *Ta'līq 'alā Fadl-is-salāt 'alā an-nabī*.

Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī (1280-1362/1863-1943)

26. *Bayān-ul-Qur'ān*.

27. *Nashr-ut-tīb*, Karachi, Pakistan: H.M.Sa'īd Co. 2nd ed. 1989.

28. *Nayl-ush-shifā' bi-ni'āl-il-Mustafā*.

29. *Zād-us-sa'īd*.

Badr-ud-Dīn 'Aynī, Abū Muhammad Mahmūd bin Ahmad (762-855/1361-1451)

30. *'Umdat-ul-qārī*, Dār-ul-fikr, 1399/1979.

Baghawī, Abū Muhammad Husayn bin Mas'ūd (436-516/1044-1122)

31. *Sharh-us-sunnah*, Beirut, Lebanon: al-Maktab-ul-Islamī, 2nd ed. 1403/1983.

32. *Ma'ālim-ut-tanzīl*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-ma'rifah, 4th ed. 1415/1995.

Baydāwī, Abū Sa'īd 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar bin Muhammad (d.685/1286)

33. *Tafsīr*, Beirut, Lebanon: Mu'assisat-ul-a'lamī lil-matbū'āt, 1st ed. 1410/1990.

Bayhaqī, Ahmad bin Husayn (384-458/994-1066)

34. *Dalā'il-un-nubuwwah*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-'ilmiyyah, 1st ed. 1405/1985.

35. *Shu'ab-ul-īmān*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-'ilmiyyah, 1st ed. 1410/1990.

36. *as-Sunan-ul-kubrā*, Multan, Pakistan: Nashr-us-sunnah, n.d.

Bazzār, Abū Bakr Ahmad bin 'Amr (210-292/825-905)

37. *Musnad*.

Bukhārī, Muhammad bin Ismā'īl (194-256/810-870)

38. *al-Adab-ul-mufrad*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-bashā'ir-il-islāmiyyah, 3rd ed. 1409/1989.

39. *as-Sahīh*, Damascus, Syria: Dār-ul-qalam, 1st ed. 1401/1981.

40. *at-Tārīkh-ul-kabīr*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-'ilmiyyah, n.d.

Bulqīnī, 'Umar bin Raslān, Sirāj-ud-Dīn (724-805/1324-1403)

41. *Fatāwā*.

Burhān-ud-Dīn Halabī

42. *Muqaddimah*.

Būsīrī

43. *Misbāh-uz-zujājah*.

Būsīrī, Abū 'Abdullāh Muhammad, Sharf-ud-Dīn (608-696/1213-1295)

44. *Qasīdah burdah*.

Dārimī, Abū Muhammad ‘Abdullāh (181-255/797-869)

45. *Sunan*, Multan, Pakistan: Nashr-us-sunnah, n.d.

Dhahabī, Muhammad bin Ahmad bin ‘Uthmān (673-748/1274-1348)

46. *Siyar a‘lām an-nubalā’*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-fikr, 1st ed. 1417/1997.

47. *al-Kāshif*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-‘ilmiyyah, 1st ed. 1403/1983.

48. *al-Mughnī*, n.d.

49. *Mīzān-ul-i‘tidāl*, Sheikhupura, Pakistan: al-Maktabat-ul-athariyyah, 1st ed. 1382/1963.

Dimyātī, Abū Muhammad ‘Abd-ul-Mu’min (613-705/1217-1306)

50. *al-Mutajarr-ur-rābih fī thawāb-il-‘amal-is-sālih*, Makkah, Saudi Arabia: Maktabah wa matba‘ah an-nahdah al-hadīthah, 1414 AH.

Diyā’ Maqdisī Hambalī

51. *al-Hikāyāt-ul-manthūrah*.

Hākim, Abū ‘Abdullāh Muhammad bin ‘Abdullāh, (321-405/933-1014)

52. *al-Mustadrak*, Makkah, Saudi Arabia: Dār-ul-bāz, n.d.

Haythamī, ‘Alī bin Abū Bakr (735-807/1335-1405)

53. *Majma‘-uz-zawā’id*, Cairo, Egypt: Dār-ur-riyān lit-turāth, 1407/1987.

54. *Mawārid-uz-zam’ān*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-‘ilmiyyah, n.d.

Hughes, Thomas Patrick

55. *Dictionary of Islam*, Lahore, Pakistan: Kazi Publications, n.d.

Humaydī, Abū Bakr ‘Abdullāh bin Zubayr (d.219/834)

56. *Musnad*, Karachi, Pakistan: al-Majlis-ul-‘ilmī, 1st ed. 1382/1963.

Ibn ‘Abbās, ‘Abdullāh

57. *Tanwīr-ul-miqbās*.

Ibn ‘Abd-ul-Barr, Yūsuf bin ‘Abdullāh (368-463/979-1071)

58. *al-Istī‘āb fī ma‘rifat-il-ashāb*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ihyā’-it-turāth-il-‘arabī, 1st ed. 1328 AH.

59. *at-Tamhīd*, Lahore, Pakistan: al-Maktabat-ul-quddūsiyyah, 1st ed. 1404/1983.

Ibn ‘Ābidīn Shāmī, Muhammad Amīn (1198-1252/1784-1836)

60. *Radd-ul-muhtār ‘alā Durr-il-mukhtār*, Quetta, Pakistan: Maktabah Mājidiyyah, 1st ed. 1399.

Ibn Abū Dunyā, ‘Abdullāh (208-281/833-894)

61. *Mujābī ad-du‘ā’*.

Ibn Abū Hātim Rāzī, Abū Muhammad ‘Abd-ur-Rahmān (240-327/854-938)

62. *Kitāb-ul-jarh wat-ta‘dīl*, Hyderabad, India: Majlis dā’irat-ul-ma‘ārif al-‘Uthmāniyyah, 1st ed. n.d.

63. *Kitāb-uth-thiqāt*.

Ibn Abū Shaybah, Abū Bakr ‘Abdullāh bin Muhammad (159-235/776-850)

64. *al-Musannaf*, Karachi, Pakistan: Idārat-ul-Qur’ān wal-‘ulūm-ul-Islamiyyah, 1406/1987.

Ibn Abū Usāmah, Hārith bin Muhammad Dāhir Tamīmī (186-282/802-895)

65. *Musnad*.

Ibn ‘Adī, Abū Ahmad ‘Abdullāh (277-365/890-976)

66. *al-Kāmil*, Sheikhupura, Pakistan: al-Maktabat-ul-athariyyah, n.d.

Ibn 'Asākir, Abū al-Qāsim 'Alī bin Hasan (499-571/1105-1176)

67. *Tahdhīb tārikh Dimashq al-kabīr*, generally known as *Tārīkh/Tahdhīb Ibn 'Asākīr*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-masīrah, 2nd ed. 1399/1979.

Ibn-ul-Athīr, Abū Hasan 'Alī bin Muhammad al-Jazarī (555-630/1160-1233)

68. *Asad-ul-ghābah*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-'ilmiyyah, n.d.

Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, Ahmad bin 'Alī (773-852/1372-1449)

69. *'Amal-ul-adhkār.*
70. *Fath-ul-bārī*, Lahore, Pakistan: Dār nashr-il-kutub-il-Islamiyyah, 1401/1981.
71. *Hady-us-sārī muqaddimah Fath-ul-bārī.*
72. *al-Isābah fī tamyīz-is-sahābah*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ihyā'-it-turāth-il-'arabī, 1st ed. 1328AH.
73. *Lisān-ul-mīzān*, Beirut, Lebanon: Mu'assisat-ul-a'lamī, 2nd ed. 1390/1971.
74. *al-Matālib-ul-'āliyah*, Makkah, Saudi Arabia: 'Abbās Ahmad al-Bāz, n.d.
75. *Nuzhat-un-nazr bi-sharh Nukhbat-ul-fikr fī mustalah hadith ahl-ul-athr*, Cairo, Egypt: Maktabat-ut-turāth-il-Islamī, n.d.
76. *Tahdhīb-ut-tahdhīb*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār sādir, 1st ed. 1325 AH.
77. *Taqrīb-ut-tahdhīb*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-ma'rifah, 2nd ed. 1395/1975.

Ibn Hajar Haythamī, Ahmad, Shihāb-ud-Dīn, Makkī (909-973/1503-1566)

78. *al-Fatāwā al-hadīthiyyah*, Egypt: Matba'ah Mustafā al-Bābī al-Halabī, 1356/1937.

79. *al-Jawhar-ul-munazzam,* Matba‘at-ul-khayriyyah, 1231 AH.

80. *al-Khayrāt-ul-hisān fī manāqib-il-imam al-a‘zam Abū Hanīfah*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-‘ilmiyyah, 1st ed. 1403/1983.

Ibn Hibbān, Muhammad (270-354/884-965)

81. *as-Sahīh*, Beirut, Lebanon: Mu’assisat-ur-risālah, 2nd ed. 1414/1993.

Ibn Hishām, Abū Muhammad ‘Abd-ul-Malik (d.213/828)

82. *as-Sīrat-un-nabawiyyah*, Damascus, Syria: Mu’assisah ‘ulūm-il-Qur’ān, n.d.

Ibn Jamā‘ah, ‘Abd-ul-‘Azīz bin Muhammad (694-768/1294-1366)

83. *Hidāyat-us-sālik*.

Ibn Jarīr Tabarī, Abū Ja‘far Muhammad (224-310/839-923)

84. *Jāmi‘-ul-bayān fī tafsīr-il-Qur’ān*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-ma‘rifah, 4th ed. 1400/1980.

Ibn-ul-Jawzī, Abū al-Faraj ‘Abd-ur-Rahmān (510-597/1116-1201)

85. *al-‘Ilal-ul-mutanāhiyyah*, Lahore, Pakistan: Dār nashr-il-kutub-il-Islamiyyah, n.d.

86. *Kitāb-ul-mawdū‘āt*, Karachi, Pakistan: Muhammad Sa‘īd and Sons, 1st ed. 1386/1966.

87. *Salāt-ul-ahzān*.

88. *Sifat-us-safwah*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-‘ilmiyyah, 1st ed. 1409/1989.

89. *al-Wafā bi-ahwāl-il-Mustafā*, Faisalabad, Pakistan: al-Maktabah an-Nūriyyah ar-Ridwiyyah, 2nd ed. 1397/1977.

90. *Zād-ul-masīr fī ‘ilm-it-tafsīr*, Beirut, Lebanon: al-Maktab-ul-Islamī, 2nd ed. 1404/1984.

Ibn Juzayy, Muhammad bin Ahmad (b.693/1294)

91. *Kitāb-ut-tashīl li-‘ulūm-it-tanzīl*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kitāt-il-‘arabī, n.d.

Ibn Kathīr, Abū al-Fidā’ Ismā‘īl bin ‘Umar (701-774/1301-1373)

92. *al-Bidāyah wan-nihāyah*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-fikr, 1419/1998.

93. *Tafsīr-ul-Qur’ān al-‘azīm*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-ma‘rifah, 1400/1980.

Ibn Khuzaymah, Abū Bakr Muhammad bin Ishāq (223-311/838-924)

94. *as-Sahīh*, Beirut, Lebanon: al-Maktab-ul-Islamī, n.d.

Ibn Mājah, Muhammad bin Yazīd (209-273/824-887)

95. *Sunan*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ihyā’-it-turāth-il-‘arabī, 1395/1975.

Ibn Manzūr, Muhammad bin Mukarram (630-711/1232-1311)

96. *Lisān-ul-Arab*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dar Sādir, n.d.

Ibn-ul-Qaysarānī

97. *al-Jam‘ bayn as-Sahīhayn*.

Ibn-ul-Qayyim, ‘Abū ‘Abdullāh Muhammad al-Jawziyyah (691-751/1292-1350)

98. *A‘lām-ul-muwaqqi‘īn ‘an rabb-il-‘ālamīn*, Egypt: Matba‘at-us-sa‘ādah, 1st ed. 1374/1955.

99. *Kitāb-ur-rūh*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-‘ilmiyyah, 1st ed. 1402/1982.

Ibn Qudāmah, Abū Muhammad ‘Abdullāh bin Muhammad (d.620 AH)

100. *al-Mughnī*, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Maktabah ar-Riyād al-hadīthah, 1400/1980.

Ibn Sa‘d, Abū ‘Abdullāh Muhammad (168-230/784-845)

101. *at-Tabaqāt-ul-kubrā*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Beirut, 1398/1978.

Ibn-us-Salāh, ‘Uthmān bin ‘Abd-ur-Rahmān (577-643/1181-1245)

102. *Muqaddimah*, Damascus, Syria: Maktabah al-Fārābī, 1st ed. 1404/1984.

Ibn-us-Sunnī, Abū Bakr Ahmad bin Muhammad (d.364/975)

103. *‘Amal-ul-yawm wal-laylah*, Hyderabad, India: Dā’irah ma‘ārif Nizāmmiyyah, n.d.

Ibn Taymiyyah, Ahmad bin ‘Abd-ul-Halīm (661-728/1263-1328)

104. *al-‘Aqīdat-ul-wāsitiyyah*.

105. *Iqtidā’-us-sirāt-il-mustaqīm bi-mukhālifat ashāb-il-jahīm*, Lahore, Pakistan: al-Maktabat-us-Salafiyyah, 1st ed. 1398/1978.

106. *Majmū‘ fatāwā*, Maktabah Ibn Taymiyyah, n.d.

107. *Qā‘idah jalīlah fit-tawassul wal-wasīlah*, Lahore, Pakistan: Idārah tarjamān-us-sunnah, n.d.

Ibrāhīm bin ‘Umar Biqā‘ī, Abū Hasan (809-885/1406-1480)

108. *Nazm-ud-durar fī tanāsub-il-āyāt was-suwar*, Hyderabad, India: Majlis dā’irah ma‘ārif al-‘Uthmāniyyah, 2nd ed. 1406/1986.

Iqbāl, Dr. Muhammad (1294-1357/1877-1938)

109. *Kulliyāt*.

‘Irāqī, Zayn-ud-Dīn Abū al-Fadl ‘Abd-ur-Rahīm bin Husayn (725-806/1325-1404)

110. *Takhrīj ahādīth al-Ihyā’*.

111. *at-Taqyīd wal-īdāh*, Medina, Saudi Arabia: al-Maktabat-us-Salafiyyah, 1st ed. 1389/1969.

112. *Tarh-ut-tathrīb fī sharh-it-taqrīb*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ihyā'-it-turāth-il-'arabī, n.d.

Isma'īl Dihlawī, Shāh, (1193-1246/1779-1831)

113. *Sirāt mustaqīm*.

Ismā'īl Haqqī (1036-1137/1653-1725)

114. *Tafsīr rūh-ul-bayān*, Quetta, Pakistan: Maktabah Islamiyyah, 1405/1985.

Khafājī, Ahmad Shihāb-ud-Dīn (979-1069/1571-1659)

115. *Nasīm-ur-riyād*, Medina, Saudi Arabia: al-Maktabat-us-Salafiyyah, n.d.

Khatīb Shurbīnī

116. *as-Sirāj-ul-munīr*, Beirut, Labanon: Dār-ul-ma'rifah, 2nd ed., n.d.

Khatīb Baghdādī, Abū Bakr Ahmad bin 'Alī, (392-463/1002-1071)

117. *Tārīkh Baghdad*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kitāb-il-'arabī, n.d.

Khāzin, 'Alī bin Muhammad bin Ibrāhīm (678-741/1279-1340)

118. *Lubāb-ut-ta'wīl fī ma'ānī at-tanzīl*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-ma'rifah, n.d.

Mahallī, Jalāl-ud-Dīn Muhammad bin Ahmad (791-864/1389-1459), Suyūtī, Jalāl-ud-Dīn 'Abd-ur-Rahmān (849-911/1445-1505)

119. *Tafsīr-ul-Jalālayn*, Karachi, Pakistan: Qadīmī Kutub khānah, n.d.

Mahmūd Ālūsī, Sayyid (1217-1270/1802-1854)

120. *Rūh-ul-ma'ānī*, Multan, Pakistan: Maktabah imdādiyyah, n.d.

Mahmūd Sa‘īd Mamdūh

121. *Raf‘-ul-minārah*, Cairo, Egypt: Dār-ul-Imam Tirmidhī, 2nd ed. 1418/1997.

Mālik bin Anas (93-179/712-795)

122. *al-Muwattā*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ihyā’-it-turāth-il-‘arabī, 1406/1985.

Mansūr bin Yūnus Buhūtī, Ibn Salāh-ud-Dīn (1000-1051/1591-1641)

123. *Kashshāf-ul-qinā‘*.

Mawlānā Rūm, Muhammad Jalāl-ud-Dīn (604-672/1207-1273)

124. *Mathnawī ma‘nawī*.

Muhammad bin ‘Abd-ur-Rahmān Hasanī Husaynī (832-906/1429-1500)

125. *Jāmi‘-ul-bayān fī tafsīr-il-Qur’ān*, Gujranwala, Pakistan: Dār Nashr-il-kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1st ed. 1396/1976.

Muhammad bin Ahmad, Ibn ‘Abd-ul-Hādī Hambalī (705-744/1305-1343)

126. *as-Sārim-ul-munkī*, Faisalabad, Pakistan: Idārat-ut-tarjamah wat-ta’līf, n.d.

Muhammad bin ‘Alawī al-Mālikī

127. *Mafāhīm yajib an tusahhah*, 10th ed. 1415/1995.

128. *Shifā’-ul-fu’ād bi-ziyārat khayr-il-‘ibād*, 1st ed. 1411/1991.

Muhammad bin Yūsuf Abū Hayyān Andalusī (654-745/1256-1344)

129. *Tafsīr-ul-bahr-il-muhīt*, Dār-ul-fikr, 2nd ed. 1403/1983.

Muhammad Hishām Kabbānī

130. *Encyclopedia of Islamic Doctrine*, USA: as-Sunna Foundation of America Publications, 2nd ed. 1992.

Muhammad Khalīl Harās

131. *Sharh al-'Aqīdat-ul-wāsitiyyah*, Dār-ud-da'wat-is-Salafiyyah, 1992 AD.

Muhammad Khatīb Tabrīzī, Ibn 'Abdullāh

132. *Mishkāt-ul-masābīh*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-fikr, 1st ed. 1411/1991.

Muhammad Rashīd Radā (1865-1935 AD)

133. *Tafsīr-ul-manār*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-ma'rifah, 2nd ed., n.d.

Muhammad Zāhid Kawtharī (1296-1371/1879-1952)

134. *Maqālāt*, Karachi, Pakistan: H.M.Sa'īd Co., n.d.

Muhammad Zakariyyā Kandhalwī

135. *Shamā'il Tirmidhī* with Urdu commentary *Khasā'il nabawī*, Lahore, Pakistan: Maktabah Rahmāniyyah, n.d.

Mujaddid Alf Thānī, Shaykh Ahmad Sarhandī (971-1034/1564-1624)

136. *Maktūbāt Imam Rabbānī*, Lahore, Pakistan: Nūr Co., n.d.

Mujāhid bin Jubayr, at-Tābi'ī Makkī, Abū al-Hajjāj (d.104/722)

137. *Tafsīr*, Beirut, Lebanon: al-Manshūrāt-ul-'ilmiyyah, n.d.

Mullā 'Alī Qārī, Ibn Sultān bin Muhammad (d.1014/1606)

138. *Sharh ash-Shifā*, Cairo, Egypt: 1309 AH.

Mundhirī, 'Abd-ul-'Azīm bin 'Abd-ul-Qawī (581-656/1185-1258)

139. *at-Targhīb wat-tarhīb*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ihyā'-it-turāth-il-'arabī, 3rd ed. 1388/1968.

Muslim, Ibn-ul-Hajjāj Qushayrī (206-261/821-875)

140. *as-Sahīh*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ihyā'-it-turāth-il-'arabī, n.d.

Nabhānī, Yūsuf bin Ismā'īl (1265-1350/1849-1932)

141. *al-Anwār-ul-Muhammadiyyah*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ihyā'-it-turāth-il-'arabī, 1417/1997.

142. *Hujjatullāh 'alal-'ālamīn fī mu'jazāt sayyid-il-mursalīn*, Faisalabad, Pakistan: al-Maktabah an-Nūriyyah ar-Ridwiyyah, n.d.

Na'īm-ud-Dīn Murādābādī, Sayyid Muhammad

143. *Khazā'in-ul-'irfān fī tafsīr-il-Qur'ān*.

Nasafī, 'Abdullāh bin Ahmad bin Mahmūd (d.710/1310)

144. *al-Madārik*, Dār Ihyā'-il-kutub-il-'arabiyyah, n.d.

Nasā'ī, Ahmad bin Shu'ayb (215-303/830-915)

145. *'Amal-ul-yawm wal-laylah*, Beirut, Lebanon: Mu'assisat-ur-risālah, 3rd ed. 1407/1987.

146. *Sunan*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-'ilmiyyah, n.d.

147. *Tafsīr*, Dār-ul-fikr, 1st ed. 1410/1990.

Nawawī, Abū Zakariyyā Yahyā bin Sharf (631-677/1233-1278)

148. *al-Adhkār*, al-Matba'at-ul-khayriyyah, 1323 AH.

149. *al-Īdāh*.

150. *Sharh Sahīh Muslim*, Beruit, Lebanon: Dār Ihyā'-it-turāth-il-'arabī, 2nd ed. 1392/1972.

151. *at-Taqrīb wat-taysīr*.

Qadī 'Iyād, Abū al-Fadl, Ibn Mūsā Yahsubī (476-544/1083-1149)

152. *ash-Shifā*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kitāb-il-'arabī, n.d.

Qādī Muhammad Thanā'ullāh Pānī Patī (d.1225/1810)

153. *at-Tafsīr-ul-mazharī*, Quetta, Pakistan: Baluchistan Book Depot, n.d.

Qastallānī, Ahmad bin Muhammad (851-923/1448-1517)

154. *al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah*, Beirut, Lebanon: al-Maktab-ul-Islamī, 1st ed. 1412/1991.

Qurtubī, Abū 'Abdullāh, Muhammad bin Ahmad

155. (284-380/897-990), *al-Jāmi' li-ahkām-il-Qur'ān*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ihyā'-it-turāth-il-'arabī, 2nd ed., n.d.

Rāghib Asfahānī, Husayn bin Muhammad, Abū al-Qāsim (d.502/1108)

156. *Mufradāt alfāz al-Qur'ān*, Damascus, Syria: Dār-ul-qalam, 1st ed. 1412/1992.

Rāzī, Muhammad bin 'Umar bin Hasan bin Husayn (543-606/1149-1210)

157. *at-Tafsīr-ul-kabīr*, Tehran, Iran: Dār-ul-kutub-il-'ilmiyyah, 2nd ed., n.d.

Sa'īd bin Mansūr, Ibn Sha'bah Khurāsānī (d.227 AH)

158. *Sunan*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-'ilmiyyah, 1st ed. 1405/1985.

Sakhāwī, Muhammad bin 'Abd-ur-Rahmān (831-902/1427-1497)

159. *Fath-ul-mughīt*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-'ilmiyyah, 1st ed. 1403/1983.

Samhūdī, 'Alī bin 'Abdullāh bin Ahmad (844-911/1440-1505)

160. *Wafā'-ul-wafā*, Egypt: Matba'at-us-sa'ādah, 1st ed. 1373/1954.

161. *Khulāsat-ul-Wafā*.

Sayf bin 'Umar Tamīmī (d.200/815)

162. *al-Futūh-ul-kabīr*.

Shāh ‘Abd-ul-‘Azīz Muhaddith Dihlawī (1159-1239/1746-1824)

163. *Fatāwā ‘Azīzī*, Delhi, India: Matba‘ Mujtabā’ī, 1341 AH.

Shāh ‘Abd-ul-Haqq Muhaddith Dihlawī (958-1052/1551-1642)

164. *Ashi‘‘at-ul-lam‘āt*, Lahore, Pakistan: Farīd Book Stall, 1402/1983.

165. *Sharh Futūh-ul-ghayb*, Lucknow, India: 1298 AH.

Shāh Walī Allah Muhaddith Dihlawī (1114-1174/1703/1762)

166. *Fuyūd-ul-haramayn*, Karachi, Pakistan: Muhammad Sa‘īd and Sons, n.d.

167. *al-Qawl-ul-jamīl*, Karachi, Pakistan: Kutub Khānah Ashrafiyyah, n.d.

Shawkānī, Muhammad bin ‘Alī bin Muhammad (1173-1250/1760-1834)

168. *Tuhfat-udh-dhākirīn*, Dār-ut-tarbiyyah, n.d.

169. *Fath-ul-qadīr*, Egypt: 1383 AH.

Shihāb-ud-Dīn Ahmad Muqrī (992-1041 AH)

170. *Fath-ul-muta‘āl fī madh-in-ni‘āl.*

Subkī, ‘Alī bin ‘Abd-ul-Kāfī (683-756/1284-1355)

171. *Shifā’-us-siqām fī ziyārat khayr-il-anām*, Hyderabad, India: Dā’irah ma‘ārif Nizāmmiyyah, 1315 AH.

Suhaylī, Abū al-Qāsim ‘Abd-ur-Rahmān bin ‘Abdullāh (508-581 AH)

172. *ar-Rawd-ul-anf*, Multan, Pakistan: ‘Abd-ut-Tawwāb academy, n.d.

Sulaymān bin ‘Umar (d.1204 AH)

173. *al-Futūhāt-ul-ālihiyyah*, Dār-ul-fikr, n.d.

Suyūtī, Jalāl-ud-Dīn ‘Abd-ur-Rahmān (849-911/1445-1505)

174. *ad-Durr-ul-manthūr*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-ma‘rifah, n.d.
175. *al-Khasā’is-ul-kubrā*, Faisalabad, Pakistan: al-Maktabah an-Nūriyyah ar-Ridwiyyah, n.d.
176. *Manāhil-us-sifā fī takhrīj ahādīth ash-Shifā*, n.d.
177. *Sharh-us-sudūr fī hāl-il-mawtā wal-qubūr*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-ma‘rifah, 2nd ed. 1420/1999.
178. *ar-Riyād-ul-anīqah fī sharh asmā’ khayr-il-khalīqah*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-‘ilmiyyah, 1st ed. 1405/1985.
179. *Tafsīr-ul-Jalālayn*, Karachi, Pakistan: Qadīmī kutub khanah, n.d.

Tabarānī, Sulaymān bin Ahmad (260-360/873-971)

180. *al-Mu‘jam-ul-awsat*, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Maktabat-ul-ma‘ārif, 1st ed. 1405/1985.
181. *al-Mu‘jam-ul-kabīr*, Cairo, Egypt: Maktabah Ibn Taymiyyah, n.d.
182. *al-Mu‘jam-ul-kabīr*, Mosul, Iraq: Matba‘t-uz-zuhrā’-il-hadīthah, 2nd ed., n.d.
183. *al-Mu‘jam-us-saghīr*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-‘ilmiyyah, 1403/1983.

Tantāwī Jawharī (b. 1287/1870)

184. *al-Jawāhir fi tafsīr-il-Qur’ān al-karīm*, Dār-ul-fikr, n.d.

Tirmidhī, Muhammad bin ‘Īsā (210-279/825-892)

185. *al-Jāmi‘-us-sahīh*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ihyā’-it-turāth-il-‘arabī, n.d.

186. *ash-Shamā'il-ul-Muhammadiyyah*, 1st ed. 1403/ 1983.

'Umar Radā Kahhālah

187. *Mu'jam-ul-mu'allifīn*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār Ihyā'-it-turāth-il-'arabī, n.d.

Wāqidī, Muhammad bin 'Umar (130-207/747-823)

188. *Kitāb-ul-maghāzī*, Nashr Dānish Islamī, 1405 AH.

Wahbah Zuhaylī, Dr

189. *at-Tafsīr-ul-munīr*, Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-fikr-il-mu'āsir, 1st ed. 1411/1991.

Yūsuf Mizzī, Ibn 'Abd-ur-Rahmān (654-742/1256-1341)

190. *Tuhfat-ul-ashrāf bi-ma'rifat-il-atrāf*, Beirut, Lebanon: al-Maktab-ul-Islāmī, 2nd ed. 1403/1983.

Zamakhsharī, Mahmūd bin 'Umar (467-538/1075-1144)

191. *al-Kashshāf 'an haqā'iq ghawāmid-it-tanzīl*, Cairo, Egypt: Matba'at-ul-istiqāmah, 2nd ed. 1373/1953.

Zayla'ī, Abū Muhammad 'Abdullāh bin Yūsuf Hanafī (d.762/1360)

192. *Nasb-ur-rāyah*, Lahore, Pakistan: Dār nashr-ul-kutub-il-Islamiyyah, 1st ed. 1357/1938.

Zurqānī, Muhammad bin 'Abd-ul-Bāqī (1055-1122/1645-1710)

193. *Commentary* (*Sharh Zurqānī 'alā al-Mawāhib-ul-laduniyyah*), Beirut, Lebanon: Dār-ul-kutub-il-'ilmiyyah, 1st ed. 1417/1996.

Indices

Index to Qur'ān

Index to Hadith and *Athar*

Index to Qur'an

Index to Hadith and *Athar*

General Index